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FROM 1833 TO 1848.

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"Et quorum pars fui." VIRG.

"Exul . . .
"Projicit ampullas et sesquipedalia verba." HOR.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PARLIAMENTARY AND AGITATION EXPERIENCES.

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OPEN-AIR AGITATION.—A BREAK DOWN.—A MONSTER MEETING.—ANATHEMA AGAINST REPEALERS.—PRETENDED COALITION.—LETTERS OF MR. O'CONNELL.—THE “YOUNG IRELAND” PARTY.—MR. DAVIS.—ELECTION OF 1841.—THE “O'CONNELL RENT.”—CANDIDATE FOR DUBLIN.—THE DUBLIN ELECTION.—CARLOW ELECTION.—ABDUCTION OF VOTERS.—A MORNING MEAL.—THE ELECTION—OUR DEFEAT.—MR. KAVANAGH.

MY first experiments in open-air agitation were not particularly encouraging. Upon both occasions, the platform, or hustings, fairly *broke down*. Upon the first of them, the platform, fortunately not at a great elevation from the ground, yielded in the centre; and the chairman, from having upon him, metaphorically, the whole weight of the meeting, was made to undergo something like an experience of it in hard physical reality.

Secretary, reporters, movers and seconds of resolutions, orators and all, we tumbled in upon him in doubtless "much admired" but not very agreeable confusion; and but for the lucky chance of a stout oaken table having covered him, the "pressure from without" would have put an end to him, as it has before now to ministries and parliaments.

On the second occasion we were a considerable height from the ground, and just before our fall we were assured that the platform "*would bear a house,*"—a form of expression very much in fashion on such occasions, but which I earnestly recommend to the particular *distrust* of all platform orators.

In both cases there had been persons underneath until a few moments before the accident. In the second case we had had exceeding trouble and difficulty to get them to remove, and the last had scarcely left the place, ere the crash occurred. A cross beam, made of green wood, snapped suddenly in two, and the superincumbent staging, with all its patriotic load, went down at once—

" Like some vast mountain,
Half sunk, with all its pines!"

It is by no means a pleasant sensation, that of thus *founding* on dry land, particularly where the planking under your feet is loose, and separates in the fall. This was the case in the present instance, and as if the danger to our limbs was not great enough otherwise, a stout young bull-calf of a farmer set to leaping among the planks, with the kind intention of re-assuring the crowd outside as to *his* personal safety, and thus fractured a man's leg, besides minor damages resulting from his untimely activity.

In October, the first specimen of a "Monster-Meeting" took place. Mr. O'Connell came up from Darrynane for the purpose, and met our Dublin party at Kilkenny, where the assemblage was to be.

Upon an elevation in a large field, just outside of the town, a huge platform was constructed, having three stages diminishing in size until, at top of all, alone and unprotected, was the seat of the Chairman.

That position was reserved for me; and upon its very unenviable elevation I had to abide for four mortal hours the whole force of a smart westerly gale, sweeping with unobstructed fury

from Mount Leinster and the comrade hills, over miles of champaign country, until it came whistling and shrieking past my unfortunate head, making every tooth jar again, and almost realizing the “galley-yarn” aboard a man of war, of the hurricane in which it took six men to hold the captain’s hat on!

It was calculated on a bird’s-eye measurement from the high top of the platform, corrected by measuring the ground afterwards, that near 80,000 persons must have assembled. And nothing could have a finer effect than the scene which ensued at the dispersion of the meeting, when for miles on every side the roads, lanes, and by-paths through the meadows and tilled fields were tracked distinctly out in all their windings to the furthest stretch of the horizon, by the black lines of the departing crowds.

But a week previous to this assemblage, the present Lord Fortescue, then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, had taken occasion of an address from the old unreformed Corporation of Dublin, to fulminate an anathema against the Repealers; cutting them off from “place, power, and pension,” favour, emolument, or office, at the hands of the Government!

We lived and prospered notwithstanding, and at this very meeting got yeoman-service out of this topic. Indeed, His Excellency's denunciation rather helped the agitation, not only at Kilkenny, but in other parts of the country.

Still the accessions to the Repeal ranks during the winter of 1840-41 were by no means in proportion to what had hitherto been my father's experience when starting a new Association. The reason has been before noticed—the ingrained suspicion with which centuries of ill-treatment and treachery have so deeply marked the Irish character.

The kind of reasoning adopted practically, if not generally confessed, was something in this strain:—

“The Repeal Agitation was once suspended before;—*argal*, it may be suspended again!”

No account was taken of the circumstances (already detailed) under which the suspension occurred; no account, or little account of the proclaimed resolution that the Repeal Standard was now finally hoisted, never again to be struck till “the Standard of Ireland should wave over her own native Parliament re-assembled in

College Green!" The *refrain* still was the same from a large portion of the Liberals of Ireland:—

"The Agitation was once suspended before; it may be suspended again. *Therefore* we won't join it."

Mr. O'Connell's answer to this was simply:—

"If you distrust *me*, that is the very reason why you should join the agitation, and so *compel* me to go on and be steady in labouring for the Repeal. The more you hold off, the more danger will there be that the agitation will again have to be suspended, through want of adequate support."

Another difficulty of quite an opposite character also came in the way of a rapid augmentation of numbers in the new body.

This was the over-eager, headlong, *terribly uncompromising* men, who wanted the Association, while yet in its weak and struggling infancy, to be committed to the strongest measures with regard to those who held off from it: measures which it required all the excitement and enthusiasm of 1843 to justify in the eyes of the country, when afterwards adopted.

According to these counsellors, an instant denunciation should be made—without giving the

slightest *law*, or opportunity of grace, and while, as before remarked, the Association itself could scarcely be said to be in existence—of all parties occupying or seeking to occupy posts of public importance in the gift of the people, (as Members of Parliament, Poor Law Guardians, candidates for corporate honours under the "Municipal Corporations Bill," which had just then passed into law,) who did not at once enrol themselves on our books.

Dublin City and Dublin County, to keeping up the Parliamentary Registration in which, the popular attention had been for some time devoted, and money applied from the growing funds of the Association, ought, according to these gentlemen, to be utterly abandoned, without a struggle, to the Conservative party; because the Liberal members or candidates for the representation of these important localities did not at once declare for Repeal, before even the people of Ireland, in sufficient number to attest their general will, had as yet done so.

Of course the same inexorable rule was to be applied to any remoter localities assisted by the Association, that was recommended for the Metropolitan.

It was to such premature and unreasoning rigidness as this that the passages have reference in Mr. O'Connell's letters already cited, where he commissioned me to communicate his opinions to the Committee of the Association, on electioneering matters.

The "*Croker's Hill*" meeting at Kilkenny (as it was, not very felicitously nor appropriately, designated from the locality where it was held) was not by any means the only *monster-precursor* of the real monster-meetings of 1843.

At four or five other places, in the interval between the summer of 1840 and the opening of the parliamentary session of 1841, there were also large Repeal meetings—not less than from 25,000 to 30,000 people at any one of them. Indeed, they were then considered so large as to attract attention and remark at a very early period of the session.

At any moment of the brief duration of the latter, Lord Stanley could have carried his bill for the further restriction of Irish parliamentary franchises, had he so chosen. But, notwithstanding his declarations when bringing forward the same measure in former years, that the necessity for it

was most urgent and imminent, and that all who opposed any difficulties in its way ought to consider themselves responsible for the repetition and continuation of what he declared to be crying evils and iniquities in the existing system, he no sooner had the power (by reason of the gradual *ebbing out* of the Liberal majority, and *stranding* of the Ministerial bark) to push effectively, and procure the enactment as law of this great remedy so recommended by him, than all at once his ardour slackened; and neither then, nor during the two or three subsequent years that he held office under Sir Robert Peel, did he take one step towards what had so long been with him a prime object.

In fact, Ireland, that had been so long made use of as a pretext for assaulting the Liberal Ministry of the day, was, in this, the final session of that Ministry's term of office, allowed to drop nearly altogether out of sight and thought. The object was accomplished. The unpopularity in England of the Liberal Ministry was brought about and established. The calumnious cry of a coalition and disgraceful barter between the Whigs and the leading Irish representatives (that cry which was

made such base use of a few years later in Ireland, and with equal absence of foundation in fact,) had done its work, and the final battle could now be given on purely *English* ground. Accordingly the Chancellor of the Exchequer's budget for the year, with its attendant infinitesimal doses of *Corn-Law and Commercial Reform*, was selected as the occasion for giving the *coup-de-grace*; the “Irish hobby-horses” (as Poulett Thompson afterwards denominated them) of the Whig Ministry, being allowed to sink quietly out of notice and of thought.

Early in the month of May in that year, (1841,) I was despatched by my father to arrange some matters in Ireland connected with the approaching general elections. The following were among the letters that he wrote to me from London, while I was engaged upon this mission.

“London, May 21, 1841.

“MY DEAREST JOHN,

* * * * *

“* * * I think I *must* go to Dublin next week, but in the meantime act for me, and act as if I was *not* to go over—cautiously, but *firmly*.

* * * *

“First,—as to Dublin city:—

“Is it *possible* to get a second Repeal candidate for that city? I fear not. I went over with some friends here the likely names, but found nobody whom we could hope to prevail on to stand. Consult Ray and the Committee. Ask — his advice confidentially. You will gain him so,—or at least disarm him.

“Next, submit whether in the last resort it would not be better have Mr. Hutton again, if we cannot procure a second declared and desirable *Repealer*.

“Inquire in the most particular and most confidential way on this subject.

“Secondly,—Dublin city again:—

“Find out from Ray what approach he has made to ascertain the constituency of Dublin city. Let me have a distinct answer. I do not care to the value of a pint of ditch-water for the reasons which prevent the precise constituency from being ascertained. All that I want is, *the fact*, the *one way*, or *the other*.

“Kilkenny city:—

“I have written to Edmond Smithwick, telling

him confidentially that you would address the electors of Kilkenny the moment that you were honourably disengaged from Athlone. You probably will hear from him. Do whatever he tells you it is right for you to do.

“ Athlone town:—

“ As soon as you possibly can, after you receive this letter, see my friend O’Beirne, and tell him how you are situated as to Kilkenny; but that you will arrange everything so as to aid the Liberal candidate for Athlone; that I should prefer him to any other whomsoever—a preference he certainly deserves for his disinterested attachment to us in reference to that town; that you and I will give him every assistance in our power; that there are other candidates spoken of, namely, Mr. ——, (to whom I must in a day or two write,) and who, if he stand, and that O’Beirne refuses, (I should have the *refusal first*,) will gladly employ —— as his agent.

“ But, above all things, see whether O’Beirne will not at once *accept the candidacieship*. Urge him to it, and let him go down at once and pre-occupy the voters. This may be of vital importance. *Not a minute should be lost.* The

Tories will spend money in handfuls, and they should be forestalled in canvassing, while yet there is no corruption in the market.

"If O'Beirne will not stand, I think he and you should take post-horses and go down to —; his father is dying, and he may wish to be in Parliament. Do you and O'Beirne put him in the right way, and give him all the aid in your power.

"If neither O'Beirne nor — will stand, there is, I believe, a candidate ready; but one whom I should postpone to any faithful Irishman.

"Do not read nor show this letter to the Committee, nor to anybody save to *Ray*, in whom I place unlimited confidence. Let, however, nothing prevent you from seeing O'Beirne at once.

* * * * *

"I enclose *you* a note I got from —. I am sure that — *will* not, and he *must* not, under existing circumstances, create a row in —. I will, if it be necessary, go down myself to counteract him if he do, and to canvass for —.

"Ever your tenderly affectionate Father,

"DANIEL O'CONNELL.

"John O'Connell, M.P."

"London, 26 May, 1841.

"MY DEAREST JOHN,

"There are no news of consequence. The result of the debate on Peel's motion to-morrow is not as yet even guessed at.

"It is thought that Lord Worsley, (present Earl of Yarborough,) and other *corn-law* men, who voted against us on the last motion, will vote with us upon this. The debate will, I suppose, last several days.

"If the Ministers are beaten, it will hurry the dissolution of Parliament; that, however, is the only effect that it will have.

"I have written to Kilkenny an answer to some resolutions that have been passed and published there. I concluded my letter with proposing you for their choice. You will, I make no doubt, hear the result from the Secretary. I take it almost for granted that you will be returned.

* * * * *

"*28th May.*—I am so torn to' pieces, that I could not finish my letter to you yesterday, or the day before.

"The time is come when the City of Dublin must ascertain who is to be the second candidate

at the approaching election. Is it not cruel at such a moment to distract our attention by ——'s personalities and bye-battles! I am exceedingly displeased at his conduct, and am convinced that he must at any risk be stopped in his reckless career. Steele, as usual, behaved admirably in the chair. And I must say I am delighted with your conduct, and your — speech, or rather speeches. My beloved John, you do give me — — — — —. You were, from the necessity of your position, obliged to treat — with too much consideration. But he must not meddle any more with — or —.

"It is not serving the country to make wrangles or quarrels. *What is desirable to be done can never be accomplished even by a Repeal triumph over dissentients from Repeal in this or that locality.* We want to convince, not to insult; and it would be better to do nothing than to excite a strong opposition.

* * * * *

" Speak to him calmly *but firmly*. And beg of him, in my name, to give us his best energies in the struggle to save Dublin; to help us to seek out a second Repealer; and if *he* cannot, and *we*

cannot get one—then to get us as good a substitute as possible.

“ I enclose Hutton’s letter to me. I am at liberty to have it published. Read it therefore at the Association Meeting on Monday ; but prepare the speakers to treat him—Hutton—with the consideration that he deserves on every account, public and private. Impress upon them that he has a considerable following, especially of Dissenters. Our cause needs the support of every class; and we should show them that we value their aid, as well as that of other Protestants. Nothing, therefore, should be said to give just cause for irritation. Get a veil of oblivion thrown over such parts of his public conduct as have displeased the people. * * * *

“ Of all men living not pledged to Repeal, I would desire to see George Roe in Parliament, if he could be got to stand. But that I fear is hopeless.

“ If John Ennis will declare himself a Repealer, he would be a good man.

“ I wish you to go as soon as possible to —, and set him quite right as to my opinions respecting Lord Kildare.

“Indeed, I wish you to know my exact thoughts on this as on other points. As far as I am personally concerned, I should *wish* to have him as a colleague. It is unnecessary to say, however, that he should be as explicit as possible in political opinion. On the whole he would make an excellent Government candidate; and I repeat, that as far as I am personally concerned, I would be very glad of his coming forward.

“I really have a veneration for his family, notwithstanding the apathy of the present duke.

“But you must distinctly warn —, that *I* am not to decide for the popular party in Dublin. They *must* be consulted. I would readily do all I could in favour of Lord Kildare; but I cannot pledge myself for the party which supports me. They certainly would prefer to try the battle with *an out-and-out Repealer*.

“But if they cannot get such, I should hope, and indeed I do believe, they would support the young marquess.

“It will be very difficult to fight Carlow. There must be a protection fund provided, otherwise the destruction of the unfortunate tenantry after the election will be terrible. If they can get no other

candidate to stand along with Ashton Yates, I suppose I must give them your brother Daniel; though it will be very hard on me to have to bear the expense of so many elections. I will of course go down to Carlow at once when wanted, and go from parish to parish *agitating*.

“ I will write off for Dan at once, (my brother was at Florence at the time,) and meanwhile hold myself in readiness to go down at call and work for him. But those who are urging me to this trouble, risk, and expense, must recollect that protection for the tenantry by some species of an indemnity fund will be absolutely necessary, as there will assuredly be plenty of evictions after the struggle.

“ My accounts from Carlow say that under the circumstances I mention, we should succeed—viz. ultimate protection for the tenantry,—immediate and extensive agitation,—and a son of mine.

“ I entirely approve of what you have done in the matter of the elections.

“ Great uncertainty prevails as to what is to be the ministerial fate on Peel’s motion. The majority either way will be very small. Our friends expect to have it. The public mind seems

coming round. There never was such a change in their favour as on the free-trade question.

"I will write two letters to-morrow. One to be read at the Association; the other for your discretion.

"Ever, darling John,
"Your tenderly fond Father,
"DANIEL O'CONNELL."

"London, May 29, 1841.

"MY DEAREST JOHN,

"I send to Ray a long letter for the Association. But I want you not to read to that body, or to print, Hutton's letter. He would be too far committed if that letter were published, and we should leave him a *locus paenitentiae* after he sees my letter to the Repealers. I have, you see, changed my mind since I wrote my last letter.

"See —, and communicate to him all I write to you.

* * * * *

"Announce at the Association as a fact I assured you of, that Ashton Yates stands again

for Carlow county with my son Dan. Announce this after my letter is read, so as not to spoil the effect of that letter. My great object is to make Carlow the Clare of the Repeal—urge *this point*.

“ I will send my address for Dan by the train as a parcel to-morrow, or next day by post.

“ Tell Davis, with my regards, that he is not aware of the great delicacy there is in managing ——; principally because jealousies amongst themselves are easily excited. Tell him the want of funds is a decisive reason for not urging the Repeal as we otherwise would. This is really the secret of our weakness. I will press the appointment of Repeal wardens until every parish is provided with that machinery.

“ There never was the least idea of —— standing for Dublin. He and I would be awkward colleagues.

“ Tell ——, I believe that all parties at Athlone are favourable to O’Beirne. I wrote to all I could on his behalf. * * *

“ Yours, my beloved John,

“ Most tenderly,

“ DANIEL O’CONNELL.

“ John O’Connell, Esq.

"Announce, also, that *Gisborne* stands for Carlow town. At least, so I have been assured.

"Take equal care that Mr. Hutton's letter does not get into print.

"Tell ——, that I believe Hutton made his peace with the grocers. They *are a most valuable class of men*, and deserve his attention."

The "Davis" mentioned in the fifth paragraph of the foregoing, was the talented and ardent founder of that section of the Repealers which came to be known much later as the "Young Ireland" party.

He was a man, it is needless to say, of great literary talent, and of a highly informed and cultivated mind, with extraordinary powers of retaining and *utilizing* whatever he had once acquired, and a constant thirst for new intellectual acquisitions. Had his judgment been as matured as were his literary tastes, and above all, if a few years more had been allowed for the process in which his mind was so evidently and so admirably engaged, of self-purification from prejudices imbibed as it were with his mother's milk, and fostered and strengthened by the sectarian

influences to which he was subjected by the accidents of birth and position, there can be no doubt that he would have acted a prominent part upon the political stage. As it was, he created a new party, and one which, if he had lived to influence its counsels, might have escaped the shoals upon which it has made shipwreck since his death.

In 1841, he had not as yet come actively forward in politics, but was evidently preparing himself so to do. I believe indeed that he was even then connected with a newspaper advocating Repeal politics, the Dublin Weekly Register, as at least an occasional contributor.

The part which Mr. O'Connell was under, in fact, a moral necessity of taking at the general elections of the year 1841, like that which was expected from him at all the elections during the last seventeen years of his life, was not a very easy nor a very limited one.

He was consulted on *every thing*, by *every body*, from *everywhere*. He had to cheer up and stimulate, to caution and to check; to mediate between contending sections of the popular party; to allay jealousies, smooth down irritations, suggest or express opinions upon candidates, write a multi-

tude of public addresses, and *lose no time* in attending to each and every one of these particulars, lest offended vanity should make the neglected party abandon exertion, or throw himself into the hands of the anti-popular party.

The interests of a man's own locality, like those of his own self, always appear to him to be of paramount importance; and Mr. O'Connell had to deal with each case thus referred to him for counsel, opinion, and assistance, as if it were *the* most important of all, and had caught and engrossed his whole attention.

In addition, he had to arrange for his own election and that of his sons, and, of course, provide what funds were required. Nor did his pecuniary efforts end here; for wherever there was a difficult election, he was looked to as a species of national treasurer, and answered the call to the best of his power.

There never was any species of public contribution of which so much returned into the hands of the public, as of the "*Tribute*" or "O'Connell Rent," as was indifferently called the magnificent annual collection made by the people of Ireland to enable my father to fight their battles in

Parliament. Even in ordinary years, large amounts went back in subscriptions of all kinds, religious and political; but in years of general elections considerably more than one-half was disbursed in the expenses of the elections and election petitions of which he undertook the burthen.

The Carlow election, to which reference is made in Mr. O'Connell's letters, was one of the fiercest contested in Ireland. Carlow is a small county, with—what is unusual in Ireland—a resident proprietary big and little; and all Tory, or very nearly so. The unscrupulous use of intimidation, petty persecution, and bribery by the squires great and small, who were always at hand and ready to assist each other in their mal-practices, had completely broken the spirit of the middle classes, and seriously depressed that of the people.

It was, therefore, a task far beyond the ordinary business of agitation to "create a soul beneath the ribs of this death" of all public feeling and patriotic exertion.

The following extract of a letter from my father when actually on the spot, will give some

idea of the difficulties in the way. The letter in question first refers to the attempt to get a candidate for Dublin.

"Carlow, June 18, 1841.

"* * *

"It is a bitter disappointment not to have Lord Kildare stand; but as we must quietly resign ourselves to get no work out of that family, let not one angry word be spoken, nor one single reflection on the duke's conduct. He is sadly faint-hearted, but there is no use in his being told so.

"We have glorious prospects here, if we could but work them out. The people are rousing, and the Catholic clergy are, for the first time for years, taking their station. One barony, that in which the Kavanagh property is situate, was remarkable for the indisposition of the clergy to agitation. Well, we have got them ALL in active motion. If the Whig candidate got the help from the Whigs which he ought, and which they can give, we should succeed gloriously.

"With respect to our own affairs, the prospect is of course clouded by the refusal of the duke

to allow his son to stand. I do not believe the deputation will have any weight whatsoever with him. I have known him visited by several deputations to beg of him to take part in several proceedings. I never knew any deputation to succeed. He never yields: so much the worse for us. I see the parishes are meeting right well."

Four of us went down from Dublin to "open trenches" for this purpose, some four weeks previous to the election, and to prepare the way for my father.

Our party were, poor Tom Steele, Arthur Ffrench, late Secretary to the late Reform and Precursor Associations, Thomas Reynolds, now Marshal of the City of Dublin, and myself.

Of these, the two first are in their quiet graves. Of my beloved friend Tom Steele, I have spoken in a previous chapter. Arthur Ffrench was a man far less known in political life, not having engaged in it till about two years before; but he had already commanded respect by his activity, sincerity and efficiency. He acted as agent to the Repeal candidates. Mr. Reynolds, as already

stated, is now an active, ever busy, and most efficient officer of the municipality of Dublin.

We had forty long Irish miles (nearly forty-eight of the English measurement) of a hilly and dusty road, in an open carriage, with a hot summer sun above, and tremendous clouds of dust below, to endure ere we reached our destination. Here we had no sooner arrived than an enormous crowd collected, and we were compelled, without a moment's respite, to "go into action," and give them a specimen of our astonishing eloquence. One of the windows of the drawing-room of the hotel where we had entered was removed bodily, and we presented our blowzed and dusted faces and persons to the delighted gaze of the patriotic inhabitants of Carlow.

Mr. Reynolds was the first to address them, and in the course of his harangue enlarged much upon the admirable "temperance movement," (then in the hey-day of its progress and prosperity,) of the precepts and practice of which he was (and is) a most rigid observer. But the effects of our seven or eight hours' *boiling and baking* on the road had been to enflame his visage most *suspiciously*; and it was whispered among us that a fellow in the

crowd, who was not quite such a passionate admirer of Father Mathew, was heard to remark,

“ Faith, that gentleman spakes very finely of temperance, to be sure ; but just look at his face ; sure, if he doesn’t drink, he *ought to take down the sign !*”

After this, it required double courage in the rest of our party (none of whom were qualified, as Mr. Reynolds was, to exhort to total abstinence) to present our portentous visages to the censorious multitude.

On the following day, Sunday, after having heard mass, &c., we started in a hired carriage-and-four to Tallow, a small village about twelve miles from Carlow, known to be the rendezvous, on Sundays, of a great number of freeholders. After the last mass there, the freeholders and people assembled, and for three long hours did we discourse “most excellent music” to them, stimulating and cheering them up to the approaching fight. We left the place amid several hearty cheers, and returned in high spirits and hope to our head-quarters at Carlow; when all our exultation was damped and destroyed, by being informed by one or two of the local leaders, that they con-

sidered enough had been done that day for a week or a fortnight, and that our best course would be to take post-horses next morning and return to Dublin !

Tom Steele looked at me—I looked at Tom Steele—Reynolds and Ffrench exchanged glances of dismayed astonishment ;—and for a while we had not a word to say ! Here we had been brought down, away from our various occupations in Dublin, expressly for the purpose of agitating, and of agitating actively, in the short interval to elapse ere the election should commence. We had made a first step with apparent success,—advanced well “into the bowels of the land,”—and were we now to strike our tents, and *déloger sans trompette* ?

At length I mustered courage to say, that we had not come down upon our own motion,—that we had been specially solicited,—that it was for no personal pleasure or advantage we had come, but at great personal inconvenience and trouble, to discharge what we believed a duty, and serve the good cause as far as in us might lie ;—that what we had seen that day gave us hope that the people could be roused, even from the depths of

the slavish depression into which the active, incessant, and grinding petty tyranny of their local oppressors, constantly resident and constantly combined against them, had plunged so large a portion of the farmer and labouring classes;—that we really should not know what account to give in Dublin of a mission so abruptly and ridiculously terminated;—and, finally, that until better reason should be given than any as yet mentioned for our *running away*, we would not only stand our ground, but push the agitation to the utmost extent of our opportunities and powers.

This declaration set matters at rest for the moment; but next morning, while in deep consultation with a large number of gentlemen connected with the town and neighbourhood, an excellent clergyman, known to be an Anti-Repealer, suddenly came in; and, scarcely waiting for the ordinary introductions, assailed me, and my father through me, for presuming to agitate, and to introduce the name of my brother.

To this new, *pleasant* allocution I quietly replied by *showing my credentials*, and informing him of the manner in which my father, after making every effort in his power to procure some one else,

had at length been compelled to consent to my brother's nomination, rather than even one of the Conservative candidates should have a walk over the course.

My respected assailant waxed even warmer, and was proceeding to lecture extensively on politics in general, when I made appeal to the gentlemen in the room—told them I was quite ready, on the instant, to withdraw my brother's name—and certainly should do so, if they did not confirm what I had said, &c. &c.

On this, there was a general *insurrection* against the worthy clergyman, my post-horses were countermanded, and we all sat down to dinner together, and became excellent friends.

A week afterwards I had to go to Kilkenny on the business of my own election; and while there some 120 or 130 *Carlow freeholders* were sent in to our especial care. It appeared that the landlord-practice at the Carlow elections had been, to "sweep the country side" of the voters several days before the election, and lodge and keep them comfortably under watch and ward within the demesne walls of one or other of the candidates, and so secure them from being operated upon by agitation.

Refusal to submit to this species of *abduction* was considered as high and grave an offence as refusal to vote according to the landlord's wish, and punished accordingly.

The popular party at the election of 1841 retaliated this practice on the landlords. For three whole weeks we had, as I have said, 120 or 130 voters of the neighbouring county snugly quartered in an old brewery in the city of Kilkenny, fed most abundantly, entertained during the day with the music of the temperance bands of the city, and during the evening with political speechification,—a strong and active watch of true Kilkenny boys being meantime maintained within and without, day and night, to prevent desertions and invasions.

The feats of *swallowing* which some of these poor fellows accomplished during the two or three first days, while they were quite new to good feeding, and our commissariat was not sufficiently regulated, were wonderful. One poor fellow, over six feet in height, and nearly five in the breadth of the shoulders—a bony, gaunt, lank-looking creature—made the following morning meal, greatly to the dismay of the caterer and contractor:—

Two plates of cold corn-beef;
Two ditto of mutton;
Bread, butter, and cheese, *to no end*;
Two bowls of coffee;
Three large bowls of tea;
A bottle of soda-water; (how got, history
sayeth not, nor yet how it was *relished*;)
And, finally,
A glass of whiskey! (This item was "*con-*
traband!")

On the day of "nomination" at Carlow, we set out from Kilkenny, with our "caged birds," to traverse the twenty-two Irish miles intervening between us and the scene of action.

First came a stage-coach, loaded with the "agitators"—Carlow and Kilkenny men intermixed; then one of Bianconi's long stage-cars, with a temperance-band to enliven us on the road; then twenty jaunting-cars, with the voters, and a *guard* car bringing up the rear. On either side we had an escort of County Kilkenny farmers, on their stout hacks, to guard our convoy from any *guerilla* charges that the enemy might take it into their heads to make.

Within five miles of Carlow we received a

message from my father, that he did not wish *any sticks* to be brought into the town, for fear of any disturbance that might give the enemy an advantage. Those who know how *inseparable* the Irish peasant ordinarily is from his beloved stick, will estimate the difficulty that we at first anticipated to induce obedience to the intimation just received. But out of the hundreds that by this time had gathered around us, not one refused to comply, when the reason was stated; and they chose a novel, and to some of us rather an inconvenient way of disarming themselves—that of flinging the sticks high into the air, giving or *intending* to give them a direction that would cause them to fall into the fields at either side.

The *intention* not being always quite carried out, such of us as were on the elevated front box and roof of the stage-coach had several very narrow escapes for our heads; and much as I admired the realization of the old descriptions of "the air being darkened with missile weapons," I was by no means sorry when the hurtling storm was over, and we were at liberty to proceed, with our heads as unbroken as there was now a guarantee that the peace would be.

The tactics of our opponents were to affect as much alarm as possible ; and accordingly we found a strong military force to greet us at the entrance of the town. But our very peaceful demeanour procured us entrance, and at last we had our convoy safely lodged in a long hay-store attached to the hotel ; where, during the succeeding night, they had a very narrow escape of being all burned to death, owing to the criminal carelessness of a man who had undertaken the duty of watching at the head of the ladder that led up to their abode, and who fell asleep, dropping his lanthorn among the hay.

We had, during the five polling days that ensued, several flagrant specimens of the “fantastic tricks” that partisans “decked in a little brief authority” can play with impunity. The sheriff, sub-sheriff, and magistrates who chose to act, were all of *the other side*. They secured for their own party all the convenient rooms and other accommodations of the Court-house ; leaving us nothing but what they could not possibly deny, and what was open to every interruption. They availed themselves of every rumour to shut gates and doors, and march soldiers and police in the

way of our voters as we sought to bring them up; and when we had surmounted the difficulties and escaped the perils *outside*, we were set upon from ambuscades in the winding passages inside, and the wretched trembling voters sought to be wrested from us, and conducted to the tally rooms of the Conservatives, where agents and rent-bailiffs were in waiting to scare the poor creatures out of all idea of independence.

Notwithstanding all this, we were doing well, when on the third or fourth day the gates to the Court-house were all closed of a sudden; and when we remonstrated on the outrageous injustice of thus interrupting us, we were informed that a report had just come in that a large force of armed peasantry were marching *from the Dublin side* upon the town! Cavalry, infantry, police, and *artillery with lighted matches* proceeded out to meet the foe, and after nearly two hours' absence returned with two men, three women, and a boy, whom they had met on the road.

Meantime we had applied to the sheriff for the keys, to get admission to the Court-house. The sheriff referred us to his deputy: the deputy referred us back to him; and when we went, we

could not find the principal. Having at length hunted him out, we were again referred by him to the sub-sheriff, who in turn was missing; and thus for nearly three hours was the polling stopped, to the great discouragement of the trembling serfs of the landlords whom we had in our tally rooms, and to the great advantage of the other party.

Finally, we were defeated by a majority of seven: those seven being actually men who deserted from us in one of the polling booths, frightened by the shouts, execrations, and threats, with which their old masters and their allies overwhelmed them, when going up to vote.

An Englishman would naturally ask, Was there no help for all this—at least, no remedy afterwards? There was none; the Whig government were too much occupied with *packing their trunks*, preparing to leave office; and the new Tory government would have realized to us the old adage of what befell the unfortunate gentleman who thought to go to law with the monarch of the nether regions; the court being held *below*. Money we had none for the expenses of an election petition; and if we had, the Parliament of 1841 was not likely to have furnished a very impartial tribunal.

An indemnity fund of several thousand pounds was however collected in subscriptions; one gentleman, the late Major Bryan, of the county of Kilkenny, giving, with a munificence for which he was distinguished upon all public and especially on charitable occasions, no less a sum than 500*l.* Many poor fellows who suffered for their honest votes were relieved; and if a little more judgment had been exercised, scarce one would have ultimately suffered. But to save *one farmer* alone, over whom an enormous arrear of rent was hanging, more than a thousand pounds were most injudiciously spent; and the collections which my father had succeeded in causing to be set on foot in other parts of Ireland to come in aid of the Carlow men, were checked and finally stopped by the unfortunate resolution adopted by the local agitators of that county, not to let the result of their own efforts for the same purpose be generally known.

I have been thus minute in describing the occurrences of this election, because they afford a striking proof how utterly misplaced the charge of intimidation, so frequently brought against the popular party in Ireland, would often be found if the facts of each case were known. There *was*

intimidation certainly, and gross and flagrant intimidation; but it was exerted *against the people*: and there *was* persecution; but the poor creatures who voted for their country were its victims, and not those who submissively bowed to the arbitrary will of the local squires.

The Conservative party had succeeded in the election contest of the preceding year, by a majority of upwards of 150. In the interval, circumstances had occurred to strengthen them still more; new registries of *sure* voters having been made, and the tenure of what they called *rebellious*, that is to say, conscientious voters, having expired. And yet, we not only beat down their majority, but would have gained the victory only for the chance defection of a few men at the last moment.

Mr. Kavanagh, one of the Conservative candidates at this election, had a strong hold upon the *clannish* affections of the people. He was reputed (I believe with justice) to be a lineal descendant of the O'Kavanaghs, Milesian princes of Leinster; and his large property included a good deal that his family had held in fee from time immemorial.

Throughout the penal laws the family had

remained Catholic, preserving their property by virtue of the antiquity of the title ; that iniquitous code not having had a retrospective operation. At length, when the storm was some time blown over, and the sun beginning to shine out once more upon the Catholics, (they having not only been freed from some of the more cruel restraints and penalties, but also admitted to a portion of their political rights,) the then head of the family, frightened by the passing cloud of the occurrences of 1798, abandoned the faith of his forefathers, and became a Protestant.

This circumstance weakened, but could not entirely counteract the old traditionaly devotion to the family, that made the canvassing of his tenantry at the election of 1841 one of our greatest difficulties and impediments.

CHAPTER II.

LETTERS OF MR. O'CONNELL TO HIS FRIENDS, REFERRING TO VARIOUS PERIODS OF HIS POLITICAL CAREER.—MR. HENRY GRATTAN.—ANTIPATHY SHOWN BY GEORGE THE FOURTH TOWARDS MR. O'CONNELL.—FURTHER EXTRACTS FROM MR. O'CONNELL'S CORRESPONDENCE.

IN these loose, disjointed memoranda of political matters in and out of Parliament, it will not be considered out of place to give other letters of Mr. O'Connell, besides those which he happened to address to myself, and relating to other and interesting periods of his protracted and arduous political career.

The following, then, have reference to the great event of the year 1829, the carrying of the Catholic Relief, or, as it was generally denominated in Ireland, the Catholic Emancipation Bill, as also to the circumstances of his own rejection by vote of the House of Commons, when first elected for

Clare, and seeking to take his seat for that county in the year just named.

Many of these letters were addressed to James Sugrue, Esq., a relative of Mr. O'Connell's, and one of the kindest, truest, most devoted friends that man ever had. In addition to his personal kindness and devotion towards my father—whose private affairs he may be said to have managed, as it were, during upwards of fourteen busy years, gratuitously, and at exceeding trouble to himself, James Sugrue had been also singularly useful and efficient in working the details of the Catholic agitation in the Committees at the Corn Exchange. This respected gentleman is several years dead.

The other letters were addressed to the late Edward Dwyer, Esq., the very able and truly estimable Secretary of the Catholic Association.

Of his merits it can scarcely be necessary to speak, to those who have taken any interest in Irish affairs during the "Emancipation" struggle. He rendered the most important, and indeed, invaluable service to the Catholic body, and to the cause: services such as could not be surpassed. Mr. O'Connell ever held him in the very highest estimation, and frequently declared that he con-

sidered it a most happy circumstance for the popular cause, to have had such a man in the difficult, laborious, and most responsible office of Secretary; and that but for Edward Dwyer, he could not have carried on the Association.

Mr. Dwyer is also dead several years. Indeed, looking back to the comparatively brief and recent space of time within which the Catholic Association rose, flourished, conquered, and passed away, it is startling to think how many of those whom we recollect to have seen (and heard) among the most prominent of its members, have themselves passed away, and left their places vacant.

The Reverend Francis J. L'Estrange, the excellent, pure-hearted, single-minded, and truly patriotic Friar of Clarendon Street Chapel, the first, or nearly the first, who set the good example to the second order of clergy, of discharging their duty as fearlessly and openly as *citizens*, as they always had done as clergymen,—his respected (and, to every member of Mr. O'Connell's family, *beloved*) name is the first that suggests itself upon the sad list of faithful servants whom poor Ireland has lost.

John Bric, the faithful and the true—a man of

singular promise of utility and *practical work* in the cause of Ireland, one who had already done much in her service during the few years that he was spared to work in it, and who would have assuredly achieved high and honourable distinction in his profession, (that of the law,) had he lived after emancipation had opened to Catholics the legitimate rewards of skill and ability, comes next to memory. Between him and Mr. O'Connell there was the warmest and fastest friendship throughout his short career.

Martin Lanigan, John Redmond, the eccentric, wayward, but not ungifted Lawless, Sugrue, Edward Dwyer, Steele, and other honoured names, crowd upon the mind. It is sad indeed to think that Ireland has lost such men—such tried, able, and devoted servants; and in this present hour of her deepest misery, the thought of what they might have effected for her relief is a new and an increased affliction.

Of him whom these true patriots so readily and cheerfully recognised and followed as their political leader, it is not for the writer of these pages to speak in eulogy. His deeds are before the world; and it is for posterity to pronounce

upon them, when the heats, jealousies, passions, and prejudices of the present time shall have passed away.

The following is the first in date of the letters referred to at the commencement of this chapter.

(PRIVATE.)

" 19, *Bury Street, St. James's,*
March 2, 1829.

" MY DEAR FRIEND,

" I have had three *appeals* to me on the subject of the Finance Committee. How ignorant they are who imagine that I have any control over your measures beyond what poor influence the advice of an individual may have!

" The three claimants are—first, the Model School—second, Staunton—and, third, Rev. Mr. Brady. On their claims I respectfully offer my advice—submitting of course the decision to the wisdom of the Committee. There were, I believe, 1,500*l.* voted to the Model School, of which, I believe, they did not get above 500*l.* If I be right in this, it would appear to me that any claim within the 1,500*l.* ought to be attended to: so far, indeed, it would be my opinion that the body

is pledged ; farther than that it would seem to me that we ought not to go.

“ As to the second, Staunton’s claim, it really strikes me to be a very strong one ; he never would have been prosecuted but that he was the organ of the Catholic body, and he was prosecuted by the very worst enemies of the Catholics : he is therefore strong at both sides. The counsel in that cause took no fees. The bill due to Mr. Scott must be comparatively light ; and suffer me to add, that there is not one single agent amongst the entire number of the attorneys who have so nobly sustained the Catholic cause in Ireland—there is not one who in my judgment deserves more attention and respect than the honest, intelligent, disinterested, and spirited Scott.

“ Pray speak to the Committee to give Mr. Scott’s and Staunton’s claim the most favourable consideration. Let them recollect what a present Mr. Scott made of his services at the Ennis election. The sum he then forgave would cover this demand of Staunton.

The third was the claim of the Rev. Mr. Brady. Everybody knows that his was purely an Orange persecution. I beg to recommend him strongly to

the consideration of the Committee. I have only to add, that if the Committee differ with me on these or any of these points, they owe me no kind of excuse or apology—not the least; each individual has as good a right to exercise his judgment on these topics as I have, and to decide accordingly.

“ The Association Bill has not as yet received the Royal Assent. You can go on receiving money for *ten days after the Bill passes*;—you can transact all business respecting the expenditures as long after the Bill becomes a law as you choose. The Bill prohibits two things: it abolishes the *name* of the Catholic Association; it prohibits the receipt of *rent* for any public body. It leaves every assembly a legal one until the Lord Lieutenant may choose to proclaim it otherwise; so that there must be a previous notice disobeyed before any legal cause can occur—save by *receiving* rent in the name or for the use of any Association or Society.

“ I will give further information as soon as the Bill receives the Royal Assent; but the Finance Committee may be certain that for the present they are quite safe in *every* respect.

“ The failure of Peel at Oxford has, after all,

had very little effect on the public mind. It is my opinion that it has made rather a rally in our favour.

“ There is but one obstacle, or rather but one danger—namely, *the king*. It is said that he would still disappoint the measure if he possibly could; but there seems to be no resource in point of ministry since Wellington and Peel have deserted.

“ Perhaps we are threatened with more hostility on the part of the king than really exists, in order to mitigate our opposition to any objectionable clause in the wings. It is now said that there are to be wings to accompany the Bill, instead of a tail to follow it. As we approach the actual movement, every thing fills one with anxiety.

“ You perceive that I am *at my post*, dinner-speeching, letter writing, &c. I have got the Radicals with me to a man. I was a general without troops until then; and you know that it is *power* does every thing. If the Catholic Association had not been powerful, we should be still prostrate.

“ Believe me, always,

“ Yours very sincerely,

“ DANIEL O'CONNELL.

"P.S. The fight is over. The king has definitely yielded; but I fear there will be a freehold wing. (Half-after-five.)"

(PRIVATE.)

"March 3, 1829.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I could not get a moment till now on my way down to the House of Commons, where the Committee is to be selected, to give you a sketch of what passed between Brougham and me this day.

"Brougham had about an hour's conversation with me; his object, to convince me that we should accede to a freehold wing if it shall be proposed. He put his arguments as strongly as possible upon the expediency of not throwing out the Relief Bill by opposing the freehold wing, if—*mark, as yet it is if*—that measure shall be proposed.

"I need not tell you that I availed myself of that opportunity of urging every argument against any such measure. I declared my perpetual and unconquerable hostility to it; I showed that emancipation, accompanied by that wing, would rather irritate than assuage; I

showed him that the people would get into worse hands than ours. In short, he left me convinced that it was the duty of the Whigs to take as decisive a part as possible in preventing the ministry from bringing in such a wing. So stands the matter at present.

“It was *curious* that Brougham should come to me the very day—*the morning of the day*—on which my Committee was and is to be formed.

“Perhaps it was accident, but certainly it was just the day when it was most likely that I should wish to be in favour with the men who might form that Committee.

“In haste,

“Yours most truly,

“DANIEL O’CONNELL.

“The Committee is just struck. I take it to be favourable.

“Lord William Russell is chairman. Almost all voted for the Catholics. An excellent Committee.

LORD W. RUSSELL.

JAMES BROUHAM.

SIR G. ROBINSON.

ROBERT CLIVE.

E. B. CLIVE.

JOHN STUART.

M. LIDDLE.

T. P. COURTNEY.

M. LOCK.

T. EASTHOPE.

M. CAREW.”

(PRIVATE.)

" 19, Bury Street, St. James's, London.
March 6, 1829.

" MY DEAR FRIEND,

" " And we will plant a laurel tree,
And we will call it Liberty."

" Yes, there is much good. The Committee have unanimously decided in my favour. Peel's bill for emancipation is good—very good; frank, direct, complete; no veto, no control, no payment of the clergy.

" I always said that when they came to emancipate, they would not care a bulrush about those vetoistical arrangements which so many paltry Catholics from time to time pressed on me as being useful to emancipation.

" The second Bill is to prevent the extension of monastic institutions, and to prevent the Catholic bishops being called lords. I will stake my existence that I will run a coach-and-six *three times told* through this Act.

" The third Bill is the freehold wing somewhat modified; that is, reduced to 10*l.* qualification. This *must be opposed in every shape and form.* I

will write, and transmit to-morrow to Ireland, an address on this subject.

“There should be meetings every where to petition against it; if possible, the Protestants should be urged to join with the Catholics in opposing it.

“We met this day, as usual, at the Thatched House Tavern. The Whigs were in conclave at Sir Francis Burdett’s. I moved a Resolution calling on them to oppose the freehold wing at all hazards, and had it transmitted to them by Mr. O’Gorman; I understand, however, that they have agreed to support it!!!

“Every honest man should join in petitioning on this point without delay. Urge this in every manner you can. Let St. Audeon’s rally. But let them confine their exertions to the freehold wing until the clergy pronounce on the other two clauses. Perhaps an application should be made on these clauses to the clergy; but I only fear the freehold wing.

“Ever yours truly,

“DANIEL O’CONNELL.”

The foregoing will sufficiently prove, if proof indeed were at all required, how utterly unfounded was the paltry allegation then and for some years made against Mr. O'Connell, to the effect that he had bartered the rights of the forty-shilling freeholders for the opening to richer Catholics of the way to honours at the bar, on the bench, and in the senate.

The truth is, he gave the measure for their disfranchisement the most strenuous and energetic opposition.

(PRIVATE.)

"19, Bury Street, St. James's,
March 11, 1829.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"By the time that this reaches you, the Association Suppression Act—the Lying Act—the worse than Algerine Act, will be the law of the land. How long it will continue so is another question. I will not be in the House one fortnight when I shall apply for its repeal.

"How mistaken men are who suppose that the history of the world will be over as soon as we are emancipated! Oh! *that* will be the time to commence the struggle for popular rights.

"But to the point: as the law stands, the

Finance Committee of the Association can receive no more money; they can sit, however, for making payments and investigating accounts. As to the future, my advice is, that the Catholic rooms should be kept up by a subscription of from five to ten shillings by each individual, to pay current expenses of newspapers, coals, candles, clerks, &c.

“It will serve as a nucleus for talking over Catholic and Irish affairs. Call it the Catholic Reading-rooms. A few months will enable us to do better, but in the mean time a rallying point of this kind is wanting, and a reading-room is just the very best you can have.

“Let me press the necessity of having such an establishment, and put my name, and my sons’, Maurice, Morgan, John, and Dan, as original subscribers. Let us *attempt* to keep it on foot for some months at least, if we can get but ten subscribers. There is no danger of the *Lying Act* affecting us.

“So much for details—now for politics.

“I am exceedingly sorry to say that the Irish forty-shilling freeholders are likely not to get any support in this country. You know already that

we sent a Resolution to the *Whigs* calling upon them to resist the Disfranchisement Bill *at all hazards*. It was I who drew it up, and Purcell O'Gorman took it to Sir Francis Burdett's when they were all assembled. Yet Brougham and all the party gave in. The Opposition, to a man, will vote for it: it almost drives me to despair on this subject!

"I sent Lawless to stir Hunt to get up some English opposition. I begged of O'Gorman Mahon to call upon him this day, and I will also go myself, but I expect nothing. Lawless's expedition has failed—totally failed; Hunt has got *no following*. I was until now convinced that the Radicals were in some power—they are *not*: they are numerous, but they have no leaders, no system, no confidence in either Henry Hunt or William Cobbett,—not the least—not the least."

The remarks here made on the English Reformers in 1829 apply at the present time, 1849, with almost as much accuracy; and indeed, with the single exception of the Reform Bill times, the English Reformers have uniformly displayed a want of unity of action, a mutual distrust and

jealousy, and a consequent weakness and inefficiency, highly disastrous to the progress of good government.

The successful agitation for the repeal of the Corn-laws cannot be deemed an exception. That agitation was sustained and brought to its triumphant conclusion, by the aid, and the most powerful and influential aid, of many who, whether before or since, never manifested any sympathy with the advocates of political reform. Indeed, several of the latter stood out stoutly and pertinaciously against the abolition of the duties on food: a circumstance of course not much to their credit as Reformers, nor saying much for the soundness and elevation of their views.

It has been often a source of amusement to us, *strangers* in the English Parliament, but a source of amusement not unmixed with considerable pain, to witness the paltry squabbles which disunite the English Reformers, and make them check and embarrass each other in their parliamentary efforts as rudely and effectually as if they had adopted the means in fashion amongst the members of the National Assembly of France, where obnoxious speakers have not infrequently

been pulled down by the tail and collar of their coat.

Mr. O'Connell thus proceeds with his remarks upon the English Reformers :—

“ This is the case with the Reformers generally : they are powerless by reason of the people who considered themselves leaders, but who are despicable both from their characters and their vile jealousies and ill-temper.

“ It is right that the friends of freedom in Ireland, or at least those in Dublin, should know how little assistance they can expect to receive for the forty-shilling freeholders, from any portion of the English Members of Parliament whatever—*not the least*.

“ You will have seen by the Duke of Wellington's speech last night in the Lords, that he is determined to carry the Bill through both Houses rapidly.

“ The clause against the Catholic bishops taking a denomination by diocese is confined to *their own acts*, and does not prevent *others* from calling them by any denomination they please.

“ It is one of the most foolish and most abortive clauses ever invented.

“ The clause against the monastic orders is equally so ; I would ride a troop of horse three times through it ; and you will observe, that no person belonging to these orders can be prosecuted before any magistrate, or by any private person. The prosecution must be in the Court of Exchequer only, and by the Attorney General alone.

“ The Emancipation Bill is an excellent one in every respect—ay, in every respect ; for although it seems to exclude me, yet, in point of fact, I wish it were passed in its present form.

“ The freehold wing is as little objectionable in its details as such a Bill can possibly be. It will make the right of voting clear and distinct ; its only evil is the increase of the qualification.

“ Very faithfully yours,

“ DANIEL O'CONNELL.”

“ London, March 12, 1829.

“ MY DEAR FRIEND,

“ The Irish forty-shilling freeholders have no friends amongst the English members ; the Whigs

and all are against them. Even Lord Grey declares he will not oppose the Disfranchisement Bill. This is cruel—very cruel.

“Hunt or Cobbett can do nothing. They have not one particle of *following*. Our petition will be presented this day against the disfranchising wing; and we must have many petitions from Ireland. We must put on record our decided hostility to it in every shape and form, so as to enable us hereafter, *and soon*, to do battle in favour of a restoration of this right.

“I deem it my duty to give this information, that the gentlemen, having early notice, may act accordingly.

“I beg now, as a member of the Finance Committee of the Catholic Association, to make a motion. I hope that I shall be allowed to make *one* :—it shall be the only one. I am quite serious.

“I wish to move that a sum of one hundred guineas be transmitted to Mr. Secretary O’Gorman to defray his expenses in London. I implore of you, my good friend, to canvass for me on this motion.

“Mrs. O’Gorman is with him; and as he is not rich, we should certainly prevent his being at any

expense on his own account. Before the Committee meet, show this letter to Rev. Wm. L'Estrange, &c. &c. I feel deeply anxious to pay O'Gorman this mark of my personal attention; and if the Emancipation Bill pass, I trust Government may be induced to pay the Catholic body the compliment of making a provision for him, by giving him such an office as he is well suited to fill, and as would increase his comforts.

"Do not show this letter to any person but to those who will feel its confidential and delicate nature.

"Very sincerely yours,

"DANIEL O'CONNELL."

The next letter speaks for itself.

"*The first day of Freedom!*
April 14, 1829.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I cannot allow this day to pass without expressing my congratulations to the honest men of 'Burgh Quay' (Corn Exchange) on the subject of the Relief Bill.

"It is one of the greatest triumphs recorded in

history—a bloodless revolution, more extensive in its operation than any other political change that could take place. I say *political*, to contrast it with *social* changes, which might break to pieces the framework of society.

“This is a *good beginning*, and now, if I can get Catholics and Protestants to join, something solid and substantial may be done for all.

“It is clear, that without gross mismanagement, it will be impossible to allow misgovernment any longer in Ireland. It will not be my fault, if there be not a ‘Society for the Improvement of Ireland,’ or something else of that description, to watch over the rising liberties of Ireland.

“I am busily making my arrangements respecting my own seat. As soon as they are complete, you shall hear from me.

“I reckon with confidence on being in the House on the 28th instant; the day to which the adjournment is to take place. I think my right *now* perfectly clear, and beyond any reasonable doubt.

“Wish all and every one of ‘the Order of Liberators’ joy in my name. Let us not show any insolence of triumph; but I confess to you,

if I were in Dublin I should like *to laugh at the Corporators.*

“I am writing a congratulatory address to the people. It will appear, I hope, on Easter Monday in Dublin.

“Believe me, &c. &c.

“DANIEL O’CONNELL.”

The “Order of Liberators” here alluded to was one of those casual expedients that stimulated from time to time the flagging energies of agitation. Every one who could boast of a service rendered to the cause—a popular right asserted—a local tyranny checked—an’ election-triumph promoted, or whatever the service might be, became entitled to the medal of the “Order.” And numbers who claimed to be enrolled during the three years of its existence, (from the Waterford election of 1826, when the powerful Beresford family were for the first time beaten, until the putting down of the Catholic Association in 1829,) abundantly proved the value set upon this little distinction.

The recommendation “*not to show any insolence*

of triumph," was most entirely congenial to the disposition of the people.

In one of the letters of the celebrated Grattan, given in the collection of his correspondence, by his son, the present Henry Grattan, M.P. for the county of Meath, there is a comparison of the manner in which the popular triumphs of 1780-82 and that of the English faction in 1801 were respectively received.

"There were two days in the Irish history that I can never forget:—The one, that in which we gained our freedom, (1782). How great the triumph! How *moderate*—how well it was borne! —with what *dignity!* what *absence of vulgar triumph!*

"The other was the day we lost our Parliament. It was a savage act, done by a set of assassins brought into the House to sell the country and to sell themselves. They did not belong to Ireland: some were soldiers, all were slaves! Everything was shame, and hurry, and base triumph!" *

The manner in which the Catholics received the news of their liberation was such as that

* Grattan's Life, by his Son, vol. ii.

described in the first part of the foregoing. We got no credit for it from our exasperated enemies; but, nevertheless, throughout the whole of Ireland there was a peaceful inoffensiveness, an abstinence from insult, and a repression even of the most pardonable degree of exultation, without a single exception in any quarter.

One signal, most *rational* and *formidable* revenge was taken by the younger Orangemen of Dublin upon my father. A runaway crowd of them took advantage of darkness to assemble in front of his house in Merrion Square, and break the *drawing-room windows*! After one discharge, they fled; luckily for themselves, as a crowd gathered at once.

The next letters refer particularly to the long-discussed question of Mr. O'Connell's claim to take his seat in Parliament, as Member for the county of Clare; for which county he had been returned at the memorable and eventful election of the preceding year (1828), and of course previous to the passing of the Catholic Relief Bill.

Up to the month of April, 1829, he had borne, upon good advice, the making of any effort to assert his claim; and he was now recommended

to come forward, in the idea that a parliament which had just distinguished itself by so grand an act of liberality, would not consent to “throw away the meed of its large honours” for the sake of inflicting a petty personal disqualification. The expectation was by no means idle. There is now little question that he would have been permitted to take his seat, but for the personal antipathy and special opposition of George IV.

This personal antipathy was shown in a ludicrous and on every account indecent manner, on an occasion which presented itself about this time.

From the period of George the Fourth’s visit to Ireland, in 1820, when the fairest hopes were entertained, and deliberately and specially encouraged from ministerial quarters, as to concessions to be made to the Catholics, wrongs to be redressed, wants attended to, &c. &c., Mr. O’Connell, disgusted and disheartened at the total breach and disregard of the royal pledges then understood to be given, had not attended a royal levee until the bringing forward of the measure of Catholic Emancipation in 1829.

When, after the usual amount of pushing and

struggling and squeezing, and inconvenience of all sorts, that is to be undergone on such occasions, he reached the door of the Presence Chamber, and had his name announced, he saw the king's lips moving as he advanced, and for a moment thought the words, whatever they might be, were addressed to him; the king looking intently at him while speaking. However, their sound not having reached him, and no farther sign being made, Mr. O'Connell made his bow, and backed out, thinking no more of the occurrence for the time.

But some weeks afterwards, he saw in a Scotch paper a statement, which on making particular and close inquiry he found to be literally true, that the words uttered by the king, as he approached, had been nothing more nor less than the elegant and *Christian* ejaculation of "*D—— the fellow!*"

Mr. O'Connell's ultimate rejection by the House of Commons, on his refusal to take the disgraceful oath tendered to him at the bar, is too well known to require any special mention here. The House, which had previously manifested a considerable inclination to show favour to his claim for admission, followed the beck of the Ministry,

when at length, in obedience to their royal master's positive injunctions, they declared against Mr. O'Connell; and thus, contrary to very general expectation, (including his own,) the election of the latter was declared to be null and void.

The only result of this act of petty and childish spite, was to send Mr. O'Connell back to another and easy triumph in the county of Clare, and make him still more popular in Ireland than ever, on account of his thus being singled out for exclusion at such a moment and in such a way.

The following extracts from his correspondence will show what were his own feelings as the important occasion approached, and *when it came*.

“*Bury Street, St. James's, London,*
April 29, 1829.

“**MY DEAR JAMES,**

“I have great pleasure in telling you, that I have ascertained that there is to be no opposition to my taking my seat on the part of the Government, unless they are compelled to it by the Speaker and Mr. Wynne. So that if the Whigs stand by me, I am certain of being seated. This you may confidently communicate to —, as well as —; and my real friend Barrett may

announce that intelligence has come from London that the universal belief was, that the Ministers would suffer Mr. O'Connell to take his seat for Clare at his own risk, and without giving him any opposition.

“More to-morrow—the post is at the door.

“Ever yours,

“DANIEL O'CONNELL.”

“19, *Bury Street, London,*
April 30, 1829.

* * * * *

“I am making my arrangements for my seat. I suppose you will hear of me “*as of*”—in the phrase of us lawyers—this day week. If Mr. Wynne and the tail of the Grenvilles behave well to me, I am sure to succeed.

“To-morrow I shall have digested my new letter. It will contain my view of the subject, and my, I trust, convincing arguments in favour of my right to take my seat. If Lord Nugent help me, as I hope he will, my success is not doubtful.

“You will see the absolute necessity of not allowing these names or any communication from me to get into print. But the Irish people may

be cheered by the prospect of my taking my seat, and being thus enabled to work for them.

"I heard that the Duke of Wellington is determined not to increase the currency, but to resort to an income-tax. This is the last *private* report, and is believed by many. Income from the funds would of course come under such a tax. The Subletting Act will be materially changed this session. Of this I am assured, and I hope the assurance will be realized.

* * * * *

"Ever, my dear James,

"Your obliged and affectionate

"DANIEL O'CONNELL."

"19, Bury Street, London,
May 1, 1829.

"MY DEAR JAMES,

* * * * "I spent all day working at my case for the House of Commons. I have every hope that this day week will see me at my post in the House.

"I intend to take an *immediate* active part in

the proceedings. I need not say to you how impatient I am to be useful.

“ Every hour increases the favourable accounts (or at least *reports*) of the intention of the Ministry to allow me to take my seat quietly. And my present object is simply to make such a case in point as will render it impossible for Mr. Sugden, or anybody else, to give me any effectual opposition.

“ Believe me ever

“ Your obliged and affectionate

“ DANIEL O'CONNELL.”

“ *Bury Street, London,*
May 12, 1829.

“ MY DEAR FRIEND,

“ I was unwilling to write to you while I remained in a state of uncertainty, with respect to the course which it was right for me to take.

“ I certainly felt more than unwilling to raise any question personal to myself, as long as it could be possible to consider my claim hostile to the Ministry. This was but an act of *gratitude* on my part, for the manly and excellent Emancipation

Bill they carried through both Houses. I call that Bill excellent, although there are parts of it, indeed, which deserve any other appellation ; but the Bill has in itself the principle of *improvement*, and its defects will soon be effaced by the inevitable results of parliamentary and popular information.

“ I was all the more desirous to pay this tribute to the Ministry, because, if I should get into Parliament, I can *never* be a ministerial member.

“ I however ascertained, that my bringing forward my claims would not and could not be considered by the Ministry in any hostile point of view.

“ You will perceive that there is not any violent hostility in the Government Papers to my right. This is, I take it, a decisive symptom of the absence of Ministerial opposition.

“ You have, of course, read my letter which was published yesterday in the Times. I have the pleasure to tell you that I am every moment receiving fresh proofs of the impression which that letter has made. In fact, the law is *quite* and clearly in my favour.

“ They may do what they please with me, but

this I consider that I have put beyond all possibility of doubt—namely, that by refusing to allow me to sit, they will do a palpable and a gross injustice. I confess that I do not expect anything so inconsistent with every sense of right. On the contrary, I have reason to be convinced that I shall meet with little, if any, opposition.

“ Unfortunately, the Speaker is a nephew of Lord Chancellor Manners, and on that account alone has some claim to my *apprehensions*.

“ But I hope he is an honourable man, and will listen to no other counsels than those of good sense and duty. In fact, it would be exceedingly wrong of them to interfere, unless expressly called on by the House, or some member of the House.

“ If then the Speaker does not go out of his way, and, in fact, make himself the scapegoat of party, there can be no doubt of my admission. I *repeat* that I do not anticipate any personal objection on his part, nor anything inconsistent with his high rank and station.

“ Upon the whole, then, my course is determined. I will, please God, make all my previous arrangements to-morrow and Thursday morning, and on Friday, *peremptorily*, I will go down and

address the House. That day is fixed on for my taking my seat.

“ Yours, my dear friend, most sincerely,
“ DANIEL O'CONNELL.”

“ *Bury Street, May 13, 1829.*

“ MY DEAR JAMES,

“ All appears well: my last letter has had great success, simply because it is unanswerable. The law is with me in all its bearings, and, as yet, I have every reason to think that the opposition to me, if any, will be feeble. In forty-eight hours I shall know more.

“ I was this day at the King's Bench, at half-after-nine, and took the new oath. So far, I have *progressed*, as the Americans say. I am now certain of getting *into* the House—that is, *as far as the table*. How much beyond that, I know not. I will then call for the new oath, and if it be administered, then the contest is over. If they refuse to administer it, I will take my seat without it, and put upon others to make any motion they may please.

“ Since I wrote the foregoing paragraph, I have

ascertained that the Government declare positively that they will not make it a *Government* question, nor give me any *Government* opposition.

“ I think, therefore, that my prospects are the very fairest: but one must not be too sure of anything to come.” * * * *

(PRIVATE.)

“ *Bury Street, London,*
May 14, 1829.

“ MY DEAR FRIEND,

“ The hour of combat approaches! At half-past three to-morrow the question is to be tried.

“ I have the judgment and opinion of three-fourths of the House with me, as I am fully convinced; but that will be entirely useless if the Government behave to me faithlessly, and if the Speaker take a strong part against me. However, that is not to be apprehended; and at all events everything appears at present to bear a favourable aspect.

“ I have great declarations of support from various quarters; — Brougham, Burdett, Lord

Althorpe, Baines, and many, very many other great names, are active to assist me. I repeat, that if the Government does not take a very decided part against me, I am quite safe. It is *admitted* at all hands that I have proved my right.

“Have you heard of the conduct of the English Catholics towards me? They have a club here called the ‘Cis-Alpine,’—a bad name, you will say. They had been much divided amongst themselves, and were now about all to re-unite. I agreed to be proposed into it, when, behold! they met the day before yesterday, and *black-beaned* me.

“However, I believe it has knocked up the club, as Howard of Corby, and several others at once declared that they would never again come near it.

“Mr. Blount has behaved exceedingly well on this occasion—no man could behave better. I believe there are many of them highly indignant at the conduct of the rest; and at all events, I heartily forgive them all. But it was a strange thing of them to do—it was a comical ‘testimonial’ of my services in emancipating them. It would be well, perhaps, if I could *un-emancipate* some of them.

"There is a petition from the parish of Dungarvon for the old Association lustre; it could not be better bestowed. I beg of you to endeavour to get it for my friend, the Rev. Mr. Fogarty.

"There are also demands from Clare; and I hope *those* are particularly attended to. I think there ought to be 20*l.* or 30*l.* sent down to Clare, to assist in the new registry of freeholders. Send for Richard Scott, and consult him on the subject.

* * * * *

"I long to shake hands again with all the worthies at 12, *Burgh Quay*. How I hate *that* affection! I hope that Staunton is allowed to continue his weekly papers to the churchwardens at my expense, if not at that of the Finance Committee.

"Yours, &c. &c. &c."

"MY DEAR JAMES,

"I have only to communicate these particulars. My letter has done wonders. Tierney, Agar Ellis, Alexander Baring, Charles Wynne, &c. have declared it conclusive.

"Lord Duncannon has been with me, and

Friday is fixed for the grand experiment. The post of Sunday will carry you the news.

“In haste.

“Yours affectionately, &c.

“DANIEL O'CONNELL.”

“London, May 21, 1829.

“MY DEAR JAMES,

“You cannot form the least idea of my first appearance on the parliamentary stage. My speech was a dry argument; but it is said to have been in manner and tact beyond what could have been conceived, and all that it should be. Lord Grey, Lord Lansdowne, Lord Anglesea, &c. are among the warmest admirers of it.

“If I be put out for Clare this night, which is very probable, I have had a kind of an offer of a *free* seat for the rest of the session, for a borough, and to address Clare at once. Let not this matter get into the newspapers.

* * * * *

“I must conclude, as I am going down to the

House. I expect little from Spring Rice's motion.

"Most faithfully yours,

"DANIEL O'CONNELL."

"May 22, 1829.

* * * * *

"You will see *I am out*, and out for the session, of course. We must be stirring. Work the press for me. I am myself preparing my address to the Clare men. It will, I hope, appear to-morrow. I do not mince the matter in it.

"Consider of forming a Dublin Committee at once to conduct the Clare election. It cannot, however, come on till the month of July at soonest. Vesey Fitzgerald will not attempt the county again. That much is *certain*.

"In haste, believe me

"Yours most sincerely,

"DANIEL O'CONNELL."

The next letter has certainly no connexion whatever with the preceding, nor with any political subject. But it recounts an incident of interest;

when Mr. O'Connell had a narrow escape of being killed, in the autumn of the same year as that which saw Emancipation carried. It will be seen that his usual activity and promptness of expedient did not desert him on this occasion.

"Darrynane Abbey,
October 18, 1829.

"MY DEAR JAMES,

* * * * *

"You may be quite sure that I will be in Dublin as soon as I possibly can.

"But my brother James is laid up with a sad accident. We were coming from his house to Cahirciveen in the mail cart, when, as we were going along the Drung Hill road, one horse stumbled and broke the pole, and then both horses started off at full speed along the precipice.

"There is no sufficient guard wall, and we might have gone down several hundred feet in a few minutes. The driver roared to us to jump out, which we foolishly did as the car was going at full speed. I fell on my shoulders and back of my head, but came off with some sound bruises and the stunning of a few seconds. As to James,

he came on his right arm, and broke it between the shoulder and elbow. I sent off for surgeons in two directions, cut up a shirt into bandages, and had splints made before Dr. Barry arrived. He at once set the bone. This is the fourth day, and, thank God! James is going on as well as possible.

“ You may rely, however, on my being in Dublin as speedily as possible.

“ Ever yours,

“ Most sincerely,

“ DANIEL O’CONNELL.”

CHAPTER III.

INTEREST EXCITED BY MR. O'CONNELL'S LETTERS.—THE CLARE ELECTION—THE “PROGRESS.”—TRADES POLITICAL UNION.—MR. O'CONNELL RETURNS TO LONDON—HIS LETTERS.

THE interest which the receipt of these letters excited in Dublin was extreme. I do not speak of the interest and anxiety experienced among Mr. O'Connell's own family, the extent of which can be easily conjectured; but amongst his old fellow-labourers in the Catholic cause, of all ranks, there was the strongest anxiety and eagerness to know the contents of each *despatch* as it arrived; and the “Parliamentary Intelligence Office,” (as the species of reading-room and temporary headquarters of agitation had come to be designated,) was crowded for hours after the arrival of the English mail.

According as the letters happened to be ad-

dressed to Mr. Edward Dwyer or Mr. Sugrue, either of these excellent gentlemen found himself, greatly to his personal discomfort, the centre of attraction, the observed of all observers, and the unfortunate victim of the most incessant and persevering *boring*. And whenever a stray missive came addressed to some other of the ancient “*generals of division*” in the agitation, the individual was for the nonce elevated into the utmost importance; and usually assumed an air of mystery and consequential reserve that procured him double attention, till the contents of his letter were at last *squeezed* out, and found perhaps to be of the most ordinary character, or referring to quite other matters than the all-absorbing controversy in London as to Mr. O’Connell’s seat.

Those who happen to pass in the present time the dingy premises, (if they be yet standing, and have not long ago fulfilled their evident threat of tumbling down,) in a still more dingy street, (Stephen’s Street,) where the “Parliamentary Intelligence Office” was located, can form little idea of the bustle and stir that prevailed there for a few months of 1829; large crowds being frequently assembled outside the house, while shoals

of gentlemen, many of them now in high official position, were pouring in and out, to hear and to bear away the news of the progress of Mr. O'Connell's case, and the chances of his success.

From the correspondence given in the last chapter, it will be seen that his hopes were high, up to the last moment, of being admitted to take his seat; and they had not become so without very considerable justification. The question involved in his case was complicated and nice; and, as usual, the efforts of lawyers at either side—men of the longest practice and highest skill and reputation in their profession—did not tend to unravel its difficulties, but rather to mystify matters still more, in the eyes of “laymen” at any rate, if not in their own. The consequence was, that many of those who had to decide upon it, finding that such grave doubts prevailed where they had thought all was clear, well defined, and positive against the claim, inclined to a manly and generous course, and began to think of giving the claimant the benefit of those doubts. In this creditable disposition, however, few ultimately persevered, after it had become finally known, and known at the eleventh hour, that the king

absolutely and utterly forbade his ministers to permit Mr. O'Connell to take his seat.

In the summer of that year I accompanied him to the county of Clare, when going to his new election. All down the line of road from Dublin to Limerick his progress was a continued triumph. The popular "*posse comitatus*" turned out at every mile of the way; and the post horses, where not actually impeded by thronging thousands lying in wait for us, were urged on from stage to stage by the shouting and running of the people, instead of the traditional *red-hot poker* which figures in the well-known pictures of "Posting in Ireland."

To those who witnessed for the first time (as I then did) one of these "progresses" of Mr. O'Connell, the scene was most exciting and curious indeed. Literally the *whole country* turned out! By some extraordinary instinct or other, some carrying of the matter by the birds of the air, his approach, even when his journeys were most unpremeditated, and in no way previously announced, (because often not previously resolved upon,) the population of the districts through which he was to pass came to know of his

journey; and from not merely the cabins and fields close to the line of road, but from those distant a mile and upwards—in short, from every point whence there was the least chance of arriving in time to salute him in passing—men, women, and children, were to be seen running at the top of their speed, and waving hats and fragments of garments, or green boughs, shouting all the while at the top of their voices.

The poor old women used particularly to attract my father's attention. Some few of them, throwing aside for the moment their load of years, used to skip and jump as merrily as the youngest there, and join the *screech* with their cracked voices, greatly to the amusement of the impudent youngsters of the crowd. But the majority dropped upon their knees as the carriage approached, and raising their aged hands and eyes to heaven, were to be heard praying fervently, and invoking blessings and mercies upon the man who was labouring to upraise a fallen nation, and to vindicate an oppressed creed.

The object of their prayers ever seemed most profoundly affected by these scenes; and I have often heard him say that he valued one prayer of

these poor old creatures more highly and deeply than the proudest honour which this world can confer.

Although his re-election took place without opposition, still every precaution was observed to prevent the possibility of being taken by surprise. All the canvassing and polling arrangements were made as punctually and particularly as though a desperate contest were imminent; and very probably this preparedness on our part had a good deal to do with the fact of his not being opposed when it came to the point.

We were greatly surprised on entering, and afterwards when traversing the town, (*Ennis*, the chief town of the county, and therefore the locality of the election,) to find ourselves passing under *white* flags at every step. Inquiry was made whether this colour had been adopted as significant of a disposition to show the *white feather*, or what might be the meaning; and we received for a solution of the mystery, the information that these were the veritable *green* flags of the *great* election of the preceding year, faded and bleached now into the semblance of the Bourbon flag of France.

After his unopposed re-election, and the tri-

umphant chairing which he was compelled to undergo, Mr. O'Connell retired for a short period to Darrynane Abbey, to recruit himself for new battles, and early in the winter returned to Dublin.

Here the Repeal agitation was beginning to stir the masses. The "Trades' Political Union," then an important name, had begun its meetings with rude vigour and most uncompromising earnestness; and the working-men of the individual trades began to come together, and pass resolutions in favour of the restoration of the Legislature of Ireland. Public meetings and public dinners of the other sections of the "Agitators" were also frequent; and everything announced that the popular strength was being knit again to seek new conquests, and recover more of ancient liberties and privileges.

A beautiful scene—afterwards often repeated, but never so impressive as on the first occasion—took place early in January, 1830, when the "Trades' Political Union" presented an address to Mr. O'Connell. They marched in greater numbers, and with greater display than ever known before, and indeed, than on any subsequent occasion; each trade marshalled by itself, with its

own leaders and banners—the latter being quite new and richly decorated (at a very large expense) for the occasion, to Merrion Square, and formed in front of Mr. O'Connell's house, while their President, (no less a personage than an Attorney-General at present in one of the dependencies of Great Britain, and one discharging his important duties with the highest credit to himself and benefit to the public service,) attended by a *staff* of vice-presidents, entered the house, and on the balcony of the front drawing-room read and presented Mr. O'Connell with the address.

The response was of course given in the same place, and with all due form, amid the ringing cheers of the enormous multitudes that filled the streets and enclosure of Merrion Square.

A few days after, Mr. O'Connell proceeded to Kingstown, (seven miles by the coach road, the railroad not then existing,) to embark for England, and was attended throughout every yard of the way by a vast crowd, blessing him and wishing him success in the new career about to open to him.

No obstacle existed, of course, to his taking his seat this time; and he did so accordingly at the

beginning of February. His first impression of the Legislature was not very flattering, nor did he find it much improve upon further acquaintance.

*"5, Maddox Street, London,
Feb. 9, 1830.*

"MY DEAR JAMES,

* * * * *

"I am fast learning the tone and temper of the House, and in a week or so you will find me a constant speaker. I will soon be struggling to bring forward Irish business.

"I am exceedingly amused by the exhibitions of the human mind that surround me. Such a finished — as — — is, I never witnessed. Indeed, there is more folly and nonsense *in* the House, than anywhere out of it. There is a low and subservient turn of thinking; and there is a submission to authority, which is to the last degree debasing.

"In haste, yours, &c. &c.

"DANIEL O'CONNELL."

The next letters are of much later date in the same year.

"*London, Saturday, Nov. 6, 1830.*

* * * * *

"I cannot write much to-day. I was hitting right and left last night. * * * I have heard nothing more of the attempt to negotiate about a change of Ministry; nor shall I until after this letter goes off to you; but I do not myself think that the Duke can stand. The exasperation about the King's Speech is extreme.

"Nothing can equal the temper of the people in their detestation of this Ministry. It would surprise and amuse you to see how popular I am grown. I refer you to the Irish newspaper correspondents for more particulars. But you may be sure to hear *from me* on every debate; and to hear from me to the purpose.

"I am delighted to perceive that the Anti-Union spirit is alive, and that its meetings continue with such vigour. The "*Saint Andrew's*," &c. was a delightful treat. Apropos of *treats*—I hope you have another political *breakfast* on foot. The conceit is admirable.

"You may there get gentlemen to undertake particular counties, so as to be responsible for

petitions from that county. In short, let the next breakfast add *business* to *speechifying*. Improve on this, and give the *boat a shove*.

"You cannot conceive what a change has occurred already in the public mind here, on the subject of the Repeal of the Union. It is not only *practicable*, but certain, if we persevere as we ought to do.

"I intend to-morrow to write a letter on the subject of the expense of petitions. Get it printed. You know that I do not wish my letters to *you* to be printed. Read to yourself the letter in the cover ; it relates to private business. Believe me always

"Yours sincerely, &c.

"DANIEL O'CONNELL."

"London, Nov. 9, 1830.

* * * * *

"The times are exceedingly critical ; this is just the period when good, wise, and considerate men should urge their claims for amelioration.

"This is emphatically the moment to get as

many places as possible to petition for the Repeal of the Union.

“The successors of the Wellington Administration, whoever they shall be, will not be able to resist the cry of the people, if really raised. We shall see a daily progress towards the principle of democratic liberty. It is most important that those successors should be convinced that the Repeal of the Union is desired by *all* the people of Ireland, with the exception of a few paltry jobbers.

“Tell this to every person who comes to the Rooms. Let every man know from me, that it is my decided opinion that we may have an Irish Parliament soon, if the voice of the Irish nation shall be expressed by petitions so numerous as to place beyond any doubt the anxiety of Ireland for that measure.

“I do not say this lightly. I am convinced that what I say to you is of great importance to be attended to—and yet we are an *uncertain* race. Before Emancipation, I saw that it would be necessary for us to have a rallying point for the future struggles of the country. I was, therefore, very anxious to get up a place for public meetings.

The theatre in Great Brunswick-street was to be had cheaply, but —— and others disliked the owner, and I was overruled. Those who overruled me all promised to find another and a better place; they all saw the necessity of having a place for public meetings. We had funds *then*, but not one step was taken by anybody but me to get that other place. I failed entirely.

“In fact, that theatre would now be quite a *treasure* for all kinds of useful agitation; at present the want of such a thing is severely felt, and each day it will be more and more so. Its utility would be constant.

“Every parish in Dublin would certainly meet if they could but be certain of having the use of a proper meeting-place. It is quite clear that the store in Stephen Street is suited, admirably suited for the purpose; and now there is a fastidiousness about the street, as not being *fashionable* enough, although it is within four or five minutes’ walk of either Stephen’s Green, College Green, or Dame Street: where will those who reject that spot find another?

“I am perfectly content to become tenant at once to any other, provided it shall be found; but it

would disgust any other man save myself from politics, to find a practical measure of this sort abandoned, or postponed first and then abandoned, upon the score of a paltry fastidiousness respecting the situation of the place of meeting.

“Is there any man who does not know that but for getting the constant use of Clarendon Street Chapel we never could have got up the Catholic Association? We cannot have chapels now; why then should not we have a perpetual substitute?

“I implore of all *real* Anti-Unionists to consider well of this; and to lay their best thoughts together to procure a comfortable and extensive place for public meetings. We cannot do without one.

“Having thus vented my *spleen*, I come to the politics of the day.

“Every body says that the Duke of Wellington must resign; he will, however, cling to office as long as he possibly can, and I am convinced nothing will induce Peel to quit his secretaryship but absolute necessity; yet every body *insists* that they must resign. I myself cannot see how it is possible for them to go on.

"Now every change must be favourable. The new men are of necessity weak. It is calculated that the leaders of a new Cabinet will be Lords Grey and Lansdowne; as yet, however, I fancy that the resignation of Wellington has not been actually sent in.

"Since I began this paragraph, however, I hear that the Marquis of Lansdowne is to be at the head of the *Incomers*. *Nous verrons*, as they say elsewhere. The riot last night was a mere tumult, easily put down by the police, though they are not armed; yet, certainly, the King's shrinking from going into the city is calculated to encourage the tumultuous in the interior parts of England.

"There never was a more critical or important period, or one in which an extensive demand for the Repeal of the Union would have a better effect. I am now anxious to remain in Parliament. I think some good may be done in the House, or rather through the House. I am determined to stick to it as long as *I can*.

"Believe me to be,

"Yours most sincerely,

"DANIEL O'CONNELL.

“ * * * * As soon as I have any news to communicate, you shall hear again from me, but at present I am all anxiety to hear from Ireland.

“ If the people will keep quiet, and allow me to regulate, I think I am certain of procuring the Repeal of the Union. This may be called vanity. Well, I *am* vain: I thought before I left Ireland that I was the best-abused man in the world, but I now perceive that I have not received half the wages which are due to me for being the faithful and persevering friend of the people.

“ Believe me to be,

“ Yours most sincerely,

“ DANIEL O'CONNELL.”

In the foregoing letter there is much that might be written at the present day. We are in Ireland at present in a state as it were of political paralysis, and although matters may mend a little, and some symptoms of political life again become discernible, there is little hope of any effectual concentration of public opinion in Ireland, without a rallying point in a fixed place of meeting.

Conciliation Hall—that most convenient and excellent place of meeting, built with the people's

money, and that has earned such odium with the enemies of the people, by reason of the services rendered to Ireland within its walls—must shortly be sold, or given up, for the mere ground-rent, for the want of but a little effort; and thus an effective rallying place lost to those who yet remain true to the people's cause. The want of it will yet be severely felt; but at present there seems no help for it.

The next two letters refer to Lord Anglesea's second visit to Ireland, and to the desire that was generally felt to mark the national sense of his former good-will towards Ireland by a public procession to receive him; notwithstanding that some ugly rumours as to the evil influence acquired over him by some whispering "malignants" of the old ascendancy fashion began to take form and likelihood, and to receive credence:—

"London, Nov. 29, 1830.

* * * * *

"I approve of preparing for a procession to meet the Marquis of Anglesea, on his return to the Vice-Royalty of Ireland; and I should think that it would not be at all amiss, but very much the

contrary, if Marcus Costello were to head the procession.

“ Lord Anglesea, however, does not go over for at least another fortnight or three weeks, and there will be time enough to countermand the procession of Lord Anglesea, should he be betrayed into making unpopular appointments in Ireland.

“ At present, what appears fixed one day is totally altered the next; or, at the least, it is so unfixed, that nothing appears settled. There is an immense deal of low intrigue, and — — — is dabbling in the matter up to the elbows.

“ What I want to find out is, what is to be done for Ireland? They *say*, a great deal,—but what *is it?* Let me know that.

“ Such is my question. As to Spring Rice’s ‘nineteen Bills,’ they may all be despatched in one word—*fudge!*

“ We shall soon see, I again fear, that the Marquis of Anglesea is getting into bad hands. The only good thing about him is his determination, which is fixed, to pack off the Gregorys, &c., from the Castle.

“ I am sorry you had not ‘Resolutions’ at the last

breakfast. The Government certainly will not meddle with any orderly public meeting. You know that Lord Anglesea's own letter to Mr. Kertland is quite a pledge upon that point; and I should have already put on its legs a new association, but that I wish to see the new Government actually under way, and the Duke of Northumberland out of Ireland, before we form another, and arrange as to funds.

" This alone prevents me from at once beginning. But, depend on it, I will *meet* Lord Anglesea and his new Government.

" Believe me, &c. &c.

" DANIEL O'CONNELL."

" London, Wednesday, Dec. 1, 1830.

* * * * *

" My present opinion is, that it is better to let the Marquis of Anglesea come in quietly, without any show or procession. I decidedly think the Anti-Unionists ought not to give him any glorification. This is the result of my deliberate judgment. Abandon, then, all thoughts of our

friends joining in the procession, unless the people, against my advice, desire it.

“ If they do, let them be gratified ; but mix the strongest Anti-Unionism with your honours.

“ The new Government of Ireland is being organized. These things are certain,—that young Stanley” (the present Lord Stanley) “ goes to Ireland as Chief Secretary, and that Mr. Doherty is out of office, and will not get *any* situation under the Government.

“ I have reason to believe that Lord Plunkett will be the new Chancellor.

“ Depend upon it, that the attempt to arrest the progress of Anti-Unionism will be a complete failure, as nothing solid or substantial for the good of the Irish people will, or indeed *can*, be done by these Ministers, or any British Ministers.

“ I am sincerely sorry to hear that ‘ the patriots’ are so insensible to the necessity of having a place of meeting of their own. The store at the back of the premises affords such an opportunity of making an admirable place of meeting, that I am almost disgusted at the apathy, or *small* motives, which prevent its being used for that purpose.

"I will, if I can afford it, be myself at the expense of putting it into proper shape and form. We can never be independent until we have a place of our own to hold an 'aggregate meeting.' I was thrown out of the theatre in Brunswick Street by miserable jealousies.

"Yours, &c. &c.

"DANIEL O'CONNELL."

Before concluding these extracts from Mr. O'Connell's correspondence, which I have thought might be of interest in a work referring to the scenes of parliamentary "*agitation*," in and out of the House of Commons, in which he was so prominent a figure, parts of two other letters that have chanced to be among those of the years 1829 and 1830, from which I have selected, may be given, although dated some years previously, and one of them not referring to *home* politics at all.

The first will show what confident hopes were entertained, and with abundant justification, of a much earlier settlement of the question of Catholic Emancipation.

*"Cooke's Hotel, Albemarle Street, London,
March 2, 1825.*

“MY DEAR JAMES,

“I believe I may venture to say that *we are to be emancipated*. The tide has turned in our favour; and the reaction of the injustice done us has contributed much to our *promised* success.

“I cannot write more to-day on politics; but I am in the highest hopes. *I believe* Lord Liverpool will take up the question. More to-morrow. I got your letter yesterday, but could not answer it till now. To-morrow I will write to you again, and at length.” * * *

Then follow some directions about law papers connected with the cases in which he was engaged, and which he had to leave unattended to, when suddenly required by the necessities of the Catholic cause to go to London.

Also some of the harassing details of arrangements to meet various portions of the pecuniary engagements which he had contracted early in life by a too great readiness in going security and accepting bills for a party who left him in the lurch. These engagements hampered and harassed

him during upwards of twenty years of his life; and, in fact, made that life often miserable. The letter thus terminates:—

“The truth is, I will sacrifice everything to stay here to get Emancipation. I have reason to hope that everything ecclesiastical will be satisfactorily settled. I *know* this. I will remain here, at *all events*, another week, and if the O'Hara case does not go to trial, I will remain here another fortnight at the least.

“In great haste,

“Yours most faithfully,

“DANIEL O'CONNELL.

“James Sugrue, Esq.”

This letter was written after a personal interview with Lord Plunkett, to which Mr. O'Connell had been specially invited. The noble Lord himself was deceived as to the real intentions of the Ministry of the day; and it is therefore not to be wondered at if Mr. O'Connell were deceived. The hopes of the Catholics were raised to the highest pitch, only to be the more rudely dashed to the earth.

Some credit for prophecy might be claimed for him on the strength of the few lines about France, with which I conclude these extracts. They were written to the same party, Mr. Sugrue, and preceded, like all his multitudinous letters to the same truly kind and truly devoted friend, with money-details of the same harassing nature, and originating similarly with those already alluded to.

The date is the 7th October, 1824, from Bordeaux, whither he had gone to meet his family, which had then been for a year in the south of France.

“ My stay at Tours, whither we are now journeying, will be very short; after I see my family established there, I will see you, please God, early in November; certainly before the first business-day of Michaelmas Term. I will be myself, therefore, in Dublin before the bills become due.

“ My opinion of France and of Frenchmen is not raised by a near inspection. Their climate is to me detestable; nor can I endure the parched and sunburnt appearance of the country. After all, poor Ireland is the spot—if she had but justice.

“ The French seem very discontented. In truth, they are full of all manner of uncharitableness. The Bourbons are, indeed, far from being popular. I should not be surprised to hear one day of their starting in a *new race of revolutions* !

“ Believe me

“ Always your obliged and affectionate

“ DANIEL O'CONNELL.

“ What a treat an Irish newspaper would be to me !”

CHAPTER IV.

PREMATURE SESSION OF PARLIAMENT.—THE IRISH TORIES.—LORD DE GREY.—REFORMED CORPORATION OF DUBLIN—ITS FIRST LORD MAYOR.—MUNICIPAL REFORM ACT.—MR. GROTE.—THE NEW BALLOT-BOX.—VOTE BY BALLOT.—MR. O'CONNELL TAKES POSSESSION OF THE MANSION-HOUSE IN DUBLIN.—DIFFICULTIES HE HAD TO ENCOUNTER.—CORPORATION ADDRESS TO HER MAJESTY—ITS PRESENTATION.—DINNER AT THE LONDON TAVERN.—SIR ROBERT PEEL—HIS SPEECH ON THE DISTRESS OF THE COUNTRY.—MEETING AT THE REFORM CLUB.—THE CORN LAWS.—M. SOYER'S DINNERS.—THE HIGH SHERIFF OF FERMANAGH.—BRIBERY AND INTIMIDATION.—MR. ROEBUCK.—PEEL'S FINANCIAL PLANS.—CUSTOMS TARIFF.—STATE OF PARTIES.—FRANCIS FIRES AT THE QUEEN.—ANOTHER ATTEMPT.—THE POT-HOUSE PLOT.

LITTLE was done in the short first session of the newly elected Parliament of 1841, save the easy task of turning out the already doomed Whig Ministry. It was with the inauguration of this Parliament that, very appropriately on account of its Toryism, and very happily on all accounts, we ceased to be afflicted with the constant repetition of the *phrases banales* for the previous nine years constantly recurring in debate, viz. “this re-

formed Parliament," and "now that we all have constituents."

This first session, or first *instalment* of a session, began in September, and lasted about two months. Of all the devices that ever have been brought into action for man's annoyance, that of a premature session of Parliament is far and away the most irritating, troublesome, and useless. It never advances the real work of the ordinary session one inch,—it never tends to shorten that ordinary session by a single day. Nay, the experienced in those matters, especially those most respectable *laudatores temporis acti*, the older officers of the House, do not hesitate to affirm, that a session before Christmas makes the subsequent session even longer than it would otherwise be, instead of helping to "*cut it short.*" And there is nothing very paradoxical in the assertion, to those at least who know how hard it is to get members to give up entirely their winter amusements in the country, and persuade them not to take revenge for the unusual duties before Christmas, by at least a corresponding period of inattention and absence afterwards.

The Irish Tories made a wonderful display in

order to *s spite* the unfortunate *Papists*, when Sir Robert Peel's Government were firmly seated in office in 1841, and a Lord Lieutenant sent over who was supposed to be *true-blue*. Every old family coach, antiquated landau, chaise, and carriage of high or low degree, was dragged lumbering out of the receptacles where they had slumbered for years, and sent up to Dublin by easy and safe stages, there to furnish out the grand inaugural procession of the representative of A TRULY PROTESTANT GOVERNMENT. For a wide radius around the city of Dublin, the posting-houses were left without horses on the days of the first levee and drawing-room of the new Vice-Regal luminaries; and poor raw-boned and skinny post-cattle became for the nonce—at least in the columns of the Dublin Tory journals—the “splendid carriage-horses” of the aristocracy of the land, who had assembled in Dublin to pay honour to the Conservative Lord Lieutenant.

Lord De Grey did not seem by any means so impressed with the magnitude and importance of the tribute thus rendered to him, as were the Dublin Mail and Packet, &c. &c. A very short experience told his visitors that he was too fond

of a quiet life to be over-anxious to see them often. Not that he had the least objection in the world to oblige them with a little bit of bigotry, and give them a small party-triumph by the appointment of some inveterate, narrow-minded, and bitter enemy of the Catholics. *That* he was quite ready to do, it being merely at the expense of the country. What involved his own expense was a different matter, if all tales be true, especially that of the celebrated "leg of beef," which the Dublin Mendicity Society accepted in lieu of, and as a composition for, the annual Vice-Regal tribute of an ox. In a country addicted to hospitality and to *joking*, this offering was an unfortunate mistake of his Conservative Excellency.

The effect on the Repeal Agitation of the advent to power of a Tory Government, was certainly beneficial. One immediate good effect, of no small importance, began without delay to show itself. The miserable suspicion of each other, which a long experience of oppression and betrayal has unfortunately generated among Irishmen, was checked by the evident impossibility of fixing an accusation upon men marked out for exclusion from office by the brand of their religion,

even more than by that of their known "Repeal" sentiments. A greater degree of unanimity, therefore, and a much warmer feeling of cordiality, began to be apparent amongst us, and the accessions to the Repeal Association gradually and steadily increased.

In was in the month of November of this year that the new or "Reformed" Corporation of Dublin came into office, my father being their first Lord Mayor. The excitement amongst the poor people was extraordinary. To have lived to witness the downfal of the old virulent *Orange* Corporation of Dublin, and the installation in its place of a body composed of Catholics and Liberal Protestants, appeared to the more aged of the popular party almost as a kind of pleasant vision, instead of a comfortable reality; while the young looked upon this success as the bright dawning of a new era, in the triumphs and advantages of which they would be largely partakers.

The annoyance, mortification, and irritation on the parts of the adherents and *sympathizers* of the old Corporation was proportionately great; as were also their expectations of further discomfiture and deprivation.

Both the one and the other party much mis-calculated. Toryism was not so easily beaten. Like the Yankee in the Indian bush-fight, it was “not half dead yet.” The old policy of obstructing and neutralizing the benefits of concession, which had been and is to this day pursued by English statesmen with reference to the measure of Catholic Emancipation, was directed against the working out of the Liberal amendment now made in the municipal institutions of Ireland. And we see its results to-day in the protracted refusal to correct the defects which haste or ill-will occasioned in our Corporation Reform Act; and in the increasing peril and persecution which is allowed to gather around the new bodies, without any effort on the part of the fair-promising Liberal statesmen of England so to improve their own work, as to enable it to resist the attacks accumulating against it.

A session has passed since the foregoing words were written; and although Bills styled *Amendments* of the Irish Municipal Law have passed for *Dublin*, we cannot acquiesce in so styling them, till experience shall have tested whether they are not delusions and frauds.

The spirit in which the Upper House legislated for Ireland in the case of this measure, as well as in that of the first Irish Poor-law, was not calculated to add much to the fame of that body. The Irish Poor-law ran a very great risk in the Lords, and its English advocates and supporters in that House might not have succeeded in mitigating the fierce opposition of their Irish colleagues, had not the lure been held out to the latter, that one operation of the new law would be indirectly, but gradually and certainly, to *check and curtail the popular franchise*.

In the case of the Municipal Reform Act for Ireland, the expectation was openly expressed and avowed, that the little dignities and offices which it would place within reach of the hitherto excluded *agitators* of the smaller class, would become a fruitful source of contention, jealousies, and *divisions* in the popular ranks, and so weaken the popular strength. And the new Municipal Act Amendment Bills have been made law in such haste, and with such suspicious support from the enemies of the people, that there can scarce be a doubt of its being hoped to turn them against the rights of the latter, by means of the power and

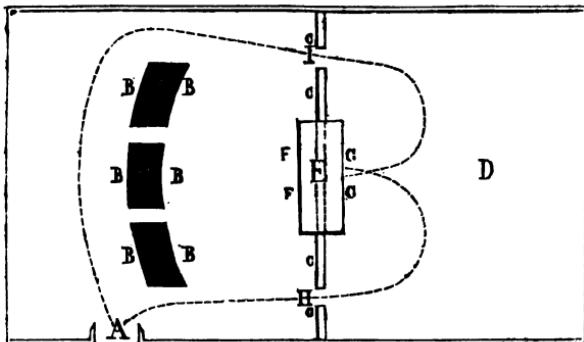
influence put into the hands of the Lord Lieutenant.

Even at the outset this expectation was partly realized, though (infinitely to the credit of the parties whose interests and small ambitions were expected to conflict) not to the extent that was anticipated. A variety of candidates started for each post and seat in the new Town Council of Dublin, and the hitherto unanimous "agitators" split up into sections and cliques, each labouring hard to return some favourite of their own. My father proposed, and with some of the wards secured, the adoption of an expedient of some general as well as particular interest, to determine the choice of the various constituencies before proceeding to the poll. Mr. Grote, late M.P. for one of the electoral districts of London, had forwarded to him some time previously two models, large and small, of a *Ballot-box*—the invention, I believe, of Mr. Grote himself—applicable to the purpose of taking the votes of a large constituency on the principle of secret ballot.

Mr. O'Connell, following closely the directions which had accompanied the box, had, some time previously to the Dublin Municipal struggle,

caused it to be fitted up in one of the Committee Rooms of the Corn Exchange; a bulk-head being run across the room for the purpose, and the box inserted in the middle of it; while at either side of the box were doors, one of which was to admit the voter into the small inside room formed by the bulk-head, and the other to give him egress when he should have voted. The judges or inspectors of the ballot were to take their places in the outside compartment into which the room was divided by the bulk-head, and they had one face of the ballot-box, together with the front of the well-padlocked chest into which the voters' cards were to fall, turned towards them. The other face of the ballot-box looked into the little compartment inside, into which the voter was to go, and through which he was to pass after marking his card in the manner in which I shall presently attempt to describe.

To render the description more readily intelligible, it may be well to trace a small plan, to which reference can be made. The following, then, was the disposition of the apartment: the Roman letters indicating the points requiring to be particularly noticed.



REFERENCE TO THE ABOVE.*

- A. Entrance door to the room.
- B. Seats of the Inspectors of Votes, &c.
- C. c. The Bulk-head or partition, across the room; reaching from the floor to the ceiling, and from side to side.
- D. The inner room, or compartment, into which the voter was to go, and where his motions and actions could not be seen from the outside.
- E. The Ballot-box "let in," or inserted into the partition.
- F. and G. are the two faces of the box; one presented to the Inspectors in the outer compartment, the other seen only by the voter inside.
- H. and I. are the doors in the partition; the first for the voter's entrance, the second for his egress.

* Just when writing this description, I have seen (March, 1849,) the advertisement in the Dublin papers of this Box for sale, along with all the other furniture and fixtures of our bankrupt Association.

The voter—his identity, &c. being elsewhere established—is supposed to enter at A, and to proceed according to the dotted line in the plan, through the door H, which shuts after him with a spring, into the inner compartment D. There he approaches the side G G of the ballot-box (E), and sees, in a species of frame at the top of the box, a card with the names of the respective candidates printed upon it. A species of gimlet hangs near the frame, and he has been instructed outside, (upon a small model kept in the outer room for the purpose,) that he is to indicate his choice by punching with the gimlet the card before him, in a line with the name of his favourite. Holes are made in the frame in a line with each name, to enable him to introduce the gimlet for the foregoing purpose. He then withdraws and drops the gimlet; and if he choose *himself* to make the card he has thus marked drop into the padlocked chest under the ballot-box, he has only to press a small brass knob, as he has been shown to do in the model outside, and the card drops safely and promptly into its appointed receptacle. He then leaves the inner compartment D by the door I, which only opens *outward*, and

closes after him with a spring; and he goes his way.

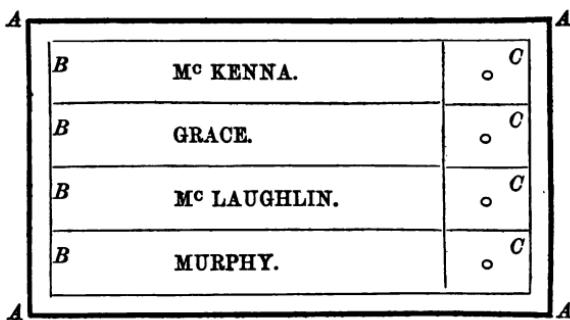
Meantime, neither the inspectors outside, nor any one else, have any means of knowing what name he has chosen to mark. The voter has been alone, and completely concealed by the bulk-head or partition. All that the inspectors see is the white and unmarked *back* of *that portion* of the card on the other side of which the names, to them invisible, of course, are printed. The frame in which the card stands is glazed on their side, and is much smaller than inside; so small as entirely to conceal that portion of the card which the voter punctures with the gimlet. If, after he has done so, he has not pressed the brass knob inside, which makes the card descend, but comes out and goes away while the card is still there, a corresponding brass knob on the outside gives the inspectors the means of causing it to fall down into the chest below; still, however, without their having the least opportunity of detecting the mark that the voter made. When the card has fallen, the frame and glass of course appear vacant; and the inspectors, through a groove in the top of the frame, insert a new card, with its back, like the former

one, turned towards themselves; and its front, with the candidates' names printed on it, turned towards the inner compartment, ready for the next voter. The latter is not introduced until the change has been thus made.

To any one who may have taken the trouble of going through this description, and of looking at the little plan to which reference is made, it must be evident that the secrecy is complete; and the process quite simple enough to be comprehended, at least after a short previous instruction on the small model outside, by the most ordinary capacity. Of course the agents of the various candidates would take especial care to see that their voters understood the process; however little chance they had of knowing ultimately the disposition of each vote.

In this way, upon the occasion I have mentioned, the votes of some thousands of burgesses of the city of Dublin were taken with an ease, regularity, and absence of disturbance and interruption very unusual in conducting such operations according to the ordinary process. Mr. O'Connell, with that earnestness of interest that he threw into every matter that he took up, whether of

great or small importance, sat in the outer room the whole day, superintending, directing, counselling, and watching ; and personally assisted in counting the cards, when at the close of the day the three appointed inspectors unlocked each the padlock he had himself placed upon the chest under the ballot-box into which the cards had fallen, and proceeded to examine the result of the voting. The following sketch will show the arrangement of the front of the card; that which was presented to the voter when inside the partition.



A A A A The frame.

B B B B The candidates' names.

C C C C The additional slip of the frame, through which a hole was made opposite each candidate's name. Through one of these holes—that opposite his favourite's name—the voter passed the point of the gimlet ; piercing the card within in the manner described in a previous page.

If any card was found to have been pierced opposite more names than there were representatives to be chosen—as, for instance, if in wards where two persons were to be designated for support, *three* names had been marked, and where one was to be designated, *two* names were marked—such card was considered of no effect, and was accordingly thrown out of the count. The phrase “designated for support” will recall to the reader’s recollection, that this voluntary ballot at the Corn Exchange was but a preliminary measure to the legal election for seats in the new town-council or corporation of Dublin, and was but a means of settling disputes among the Liberals as to the particular individual or individuals who should receive general support at that election, by mutual consent and agreement among the various sections into which the Liberal or popular party had been split.

The secrecy then of the ballot was found complete; the facility and rapidity of taking the votes complete; the opportunity also complete for each voter to act according to his own will and private inclinations, without being subject to any extraneous influence; and finally, and as a necessary

consequence of the success of the steps in the points just enumerated, the result of the ballot gave complete satisfaction, and restored a unity of action to the councils of the popular party in the approaching struggle. Of course there were some few *malcontents* and *mutineers*, as will always occur among bodies of men, large or small, seeking to come to a common decision and purpose. These worthies broke off from their agreement, and voted according to their previous fancy, or to the fancy of the moment; but the vast majority of those who had taken part in the ballot-experiment remained true to their engagements, and the consequence was, that in the wards whose electors and candidates had submitted to this ordeal the Tory enemy was easily and thoroughly beaten.

For nearly two months after his election as Lord Mayor, my father could not be prevailed upon to leave his comfortable house in Merrion-square, and go to the Mansion-house. The latter, a building of the time of William the Third, or Queen Anne, has some good rooms on the ground floor, but very defective accommodation for a family upstairs, as well as for unfortunate servants.

The Dublin Orangemen were sorely disappointed when he at last overcame his reluctance, and entered its precincts. They had hoped that that sacred citadel of sectarian and political ascendancy would never

“By *papist* feet be trod;”

and the idea of having an O’Connell living where true-blue and *no surrender* Lord Mayors had so long reigned, and where a Gifford, a Duigenan, and other *were-wolves* of fierce and vulgar bigotry had resorted, was to them intolerable; but *they little knew*, poor men, to what audacious length Popish audacity and profanity would go. Presently a horrid whisper ran through all Orange-land, then grew into a hoarse murmur, and finally burst out in a shout of indignant astonishment and execration. The fact, the appalling fact became known, that the Papist intruder, Daniel O’Connell, had dared to outrage the sacred memories of the domicile he had invaded, and the shades of Orange heroes that were said to flit through the dusty and comfortless passages of the rooms of the Mansion-house, revisiting the glimpses of the moon, by causing Catholic prayers to be offered up by a real live Catholic or

Popish priest, upon one Sunday, when he was unable to go out to chapel.

After such conduct it was impossible to say where the audacity of the Papists would stop! The establishment of the Inquisition itself, in the large banqueting-room behind the Mansion-house, which had been erected for the purpose of entertaining that truly Protestant monarch George the Fourth when he visited his Irish dominions, was by no means improbable as the next proceeding.

Without unduly speaking of one with whom my connexion was so close, it may be allowable that I should say that, but for Mr. O'Connell's legal knowledge, personal superintendence, advice and exertions, *physical* as well as moral, it would have been utterly impossible to have got the new Corporation to work; such were the designedly intricate and difficult provisions of the Act under which it was constituted, and the entire inexperience in such matters, and confusion of counsels, among the liberal constituency of the city of Dublin.

That the reader may judge of one form of these difficulties, it will be permitted to state

that no less than 8,000*l.* was the expenditure rendered inevitably necessary in constituting the machinery for the elections, and bringing the Corporation into working order; and all this expense was official, and entirely irrespective of the personal disbursements of the candidates. The new Corporation, therefore, was not only saddled with the ancient debts and encumbrances contracted by the reckless and characterless partisans whom they succeeded, but were *inevitably* compelled, by the minute and multitudinous provisions and requirements of the Act, to incur at their outset an additional burthen, to the amount before mentioned.

Having at last got the body fairly on its legs, and having discharged all the duties, conventional as well as legal, that a Lord Mayor has at his first entrance into office to perform—such as entertaining, presiding at meetings, attending charity sermons, and, above all, the important point of giving subscriptions, contributions, &c. to all manner of public objects and institutions—Mr. O'Connell set out late in February, 1842, to attend Parliament.

One duty of his new office he had to discharge

in full paraphernalia of state, a short time after arriving in London. The Corporation of Dublin had agreed to an address, congratulating her Majesty upon her then recent marriage with Prince Albert; and they had claimed their right, “and had their claim allowed,” to present it by a deputation of their own number, to her Majesty in person. Accordingly, two of the aldermen and two of the common councillors, representing respectively the two classes of corporators, accompanied by the Town Clerk, Sword and Mace-bearers, Marshal and High Constable of the body, *rendezvoused* at my father’s hotel in London on the appointed day, all *en grande tenue*, for the purpose of attending him when presenting the address. Some three or four Irish M.P.s and one or two burgesses of Dublin, who happened to be in town at the moment, added to the *tail*: and away we went through Pall Mall, with many a jeer from the passers-by at the modest and *mitigated* display of gingerbread on the equipages and appointments of “the shabby *Irish* Corporation.”

We were kept waiting below for a short time, and then marshalled in state up the great staircase of Buckingham Palace: the Corporation officers

going first, and then the Lord Mayor and his chaplain. The latter, a most respectable and deservedly respected old clergyman, now some years dead, gave some amusement just at this important moment, by a display of one of the little harmless peculiarities for which he was noted in laughter-loving Dublin. The oldest *curate*, not only in Dublin, but perhaps in *Ireland*—having been in that subordinate rank for nearly fifty years, during the greater part of which lengthened period he had remained in it *voluntarily*, refusing several parishes which had been successively offered to him,—he yet had from the Court of Rome the honorary title and dignity of a *Monsignore*, part of the outward and visible signs of which honorary office are a short mantle of black silk, worn on the shoulders, and a neck-cloth, stockings, and gloves of prelatical purple. Both stockings and gloves in his case bore testimony, by many a *darn* and many a discoloration, to the habits of a most rigid economy, which he had practised through life for the most laudable and unvarying purpose of dedicating the savings of his small stipend to erecting “free foundations” or *burses* for ecclesiastical students in

Maynooth, and, I believe, the Irish Ecclesiastical College at Rome. One of these gloves, marked by many a token of his honourable and apostolical poverty, he now held up to the fastidious eyes of a gold-bedizened and perfumed official of the Palace, and said, in his own homely, fatherly way,—

“ *My dear,* I left the fellow of this glove in the parlour below. Will you look for it for me, while we are upstairs? and the Lord bless you!”

“ Certainly, Sir, certainly; I shall be sure to have it for you as you come down;” was the civil and very proper reply; and the assurance was most punctually redeemed.

After due marshalling in the ante-chamber, the double doors into the throne-room were opened, and in we went to the royal presence. Had the fates spared Lord Eldon to witness that day and that scene, how his inmost soul would have been shocked to see Irish Papists, clad in the despoiled trophies of the Protestant Corporation of Dublin, marching up in solemn state to the crowned representative of the Protestant House of Brunswick, to speak with her face to face! And how would not

“ On Horror's head horrors accumulate,”

could he have heard her Majesty, in her own singularly clear, pleasing, and silver-toned enunciation, express her gracious acknowledgment of the respectful congratulations of the “mere Irish”—and worse than that, the *Papist* Irish!

A dinner at the London Tavern, conducted on the *Reformed-corporation* principles, viz. charges as *moderate* at least as the *London Tavern* would undertake for, and charges paid out of PRIVATE pockets instead of out of corporation property, closed merrily the proceedings of the day.

Having about this period commenced a kind of very irregular journal of passing occurrences of interest in the political world, I transcribe, without alteration or emendation, from it a few notices, jotted down from time to time according to impressions of the moment, of some of the events of the parliamentary session of 1842.

“*Thursday, Feb. 10, 1842.*—Last night Peel at length prescribed (to use his own medical simile) for the distress of these countries. There was of course great anxiety to hear his plans, and consequently a very full house. The Anti-Corn-law delegates marched down full six hundred strong, it

is said, but could not get admission. At a little after five Peel rose, and there was instantly, and throughout his speech, the deepest attention.

"For two hours and a half did he speak, and in all that time no one enlarged view, no one statesman-like sentiment! To be sure, his cause was bad, and he was restrained and fettered by his party; but so much the more disgrace to him. He confessed the existence of distress, which he had denied last August; but he said that Corn-laws had nothing to do with it; that is, that restrictions on the importation of food, and consequent high prices of food, to the poor man, are no real evil to him; and that the loss and ruin now falling heavily upon the manufacturers, are in no way caused by the retaliation of foreigners in shutting their markets against British manufactures in return for the exclusion of their agricultural produce from British ports! He attributed the distress to, first, the war with China, which interferes with our trade thither! second, to over speculation; third, to *improvements in machinery*; fourth, to the derangement of intercourse with America, from her monetary confusion (omitting the exceeding likelihood that if America could

have sent her corn, she would have paid much of her debts); fifth, to the dispensation of Providence! &c. &c.

“ He then combated, or addressed himself to combat, the total repealers and the fixed-duty men. To the first he brought up the old bugbear of dependence upon foreigners, and to the second he said, that their fixed duty would be useless when corn was low, and cruel when corn was high—asserting, and merely *asserting*, that it would not prevent fluctuations as great as at present! He also argued generally against the idea that cheap bread makes the comfort of a people; contrasting Prussia, &c., with England; bread being cheaper in the former than the latter, and yet a greater average consumption of bread, meat, sugar, &c., per head among the people of the latter country than those of the former,—as if that were any reason for not giving bread as cheap to the English!

“ He then came to his plan. First, &c. &c.

* * * * *

“ This is an insult, as Cobden truly called it last night. It leaves all the restriction and the grinding pressure of the Corn-laws, while it is put forward as a measure of relief; and the insult is

aggravated by the shallow trick of the Duke of Buckingham's resignation of office.

" Of course the other measures of this Government, where they pretend relief, will be equally delusive ; but there is little doubt their measures towards poor Ireland will be of an efficient character—efficient in evil and tyranny.

" As yet, indeed, notwithstanding the powerful and reckless majority against Ireland, there is none of the bitterness of hostility breaking out openly that used to be manifested while the party were in opposition. But this present forbearance is all to spread a thin veil of moderation over their intentions, until their preparations for action are made ; and then *ex victis !* Ireland shall pay for her long opposition to the Tory party.

" She has now for more than ten years returned a strong Liberal majority. Had she a Parliament of her own, what measures of benefit would she not have passed in that interval ! She returned at this last election, despite of the most reckless intimidation and foul play, a Liberal majority. Had she a Parliament of her own, the Government would be Liberal in Ireland.

" 4 P.M.—A meeting of the liberal M.P.s and late

M.P.s at the Reform Club, good feeling prevailing: rather a disposition on the part of the Whig section to conciliate the more popular portion of the party; but though I think this will improve, through the pressure of sheer necessity, I fear they would need more experience of adversity to make them act steadily in the true interest of the people.

“ On Monday, we have consented that an amendment should be moved to the Speaker’s leaving the chair for the Corn-laws Committee, to this effect: ‘That no modification of the Corn-laws can be satisfactory that preserves the sliding scale.’ This motion enables us to vote all together; —when beaten on that, Villiers moves for *total Repeal*.

“ A symptom that the Whigs are verging towards *popularizing* themselves a little more, is the getting up of mixed dinners at the Reform Club once a-week, where we shall gradually get some knowledge of each other, and perhaps some little mutual asperities may be softened down.

“ The establishment of the Tories in power is of course a blow to the Whigs, and a heavy discouragement to the English Radicals; but what

do they suffer from it, comparable with what we Irish are suffering, and must prepare ourselves to suffer! The bench is being recruited with unscrupulous partisans, promoted for their partisanship; and in all cases touching political rights and political liberty, they will decide for their party. The jury-box is shut to fairness and honesty, for the sheriffs are *of the right sort*. Again, Tories dismissed for misconduct have been restored to the bench, fresh Tories added in crowds, and an ill-feeling on the part of the Government towards the stipendiaries, *i. e.* the really responsible magistrates, is declared."

The speech of Sir Robert Peel commented upon in the first of the foregoing extracts, was one of the most tantalizing ever delivered in Parliament within the memory of that respectable and often-quoted personage, "the oldest inhabitant!" For two mortal hours did he go about his subject and about it, without ever coming to it; at least to that part of his subject which in the heated and fevered interest of the time was most looked for and waited for by his auditory, viz. his long rumoured and pompously heralded plan for the

amendment of the Corn-laws. Perhaps it is not at all an exaggeration to say, that full twenty different times, if not oftener, men bristled up, fixed themselves newly on their seats, uttered a short impatient “Hush!” to their equally anxious and impatient neighbours, and drew in their breaths hard between their teeth, with the ejaculation, “*Now he comes to it!*” as the Minister seemed at length to be winding up his protracted exordium, and approaching the desired exposition. But no! he had *not* come to it,—they were totally mistaken,—never more mistaken in their lives! Up suddenly got a new hare, and away went Sir Robert Peel at a tangent in full chase of it, and coursed it through all its doubles with most exemplary industry and activity, while the assembled members

“*Conticuere omnes, intentique ora tenebant,*”

aghast and blank with disappointment after disappointment.

This could not, however, last for ever. All human miseries, as well as human joys, are finite; and the general law prevailed *even* with this speech. Out came, sharp, distinct, and brief enough, when

at length it did come, the modification-proposal described in the foregoing extract.

It came in time for *post*, and little more than in time for post. Just one moment was given to draw a long breath of relieved expectation, another to interchange looks and comments of astonishment, dissatisfaction, or otherwise, and then “the school broke up,” and members scurried away to our small inconvenient library, to the writing-room in the new lobby, to the smoking and nearest committee rooms, the vote office, waiting-room, and even the crowded *old* lobby, seizing on and occupying every square inch of surface that would give support to even half a sheet of note-paper, as they scribbled to friends, constituents, and others, the chief points of the new *thimble-rig* attempted with the Corn-laws.

The prominent symptom was *dissatisfaction*. The Corn-law advocates were vexed their favourite legislation should be meddled or tampered with, at all. The waverers and *half-measure* men did not like *this* half-measure, if it could be called *even* a *half-measure*. And we may remark in passing, that there is none so intolerant of the modifications and half-measures of others, as your professed

modification and half-measure man himself. He is ever sure to have, or at the least to fancy himself to have, some nice little pet expedient of his own, calculated, according to his opinion, to do wonders, if the prejudices and prepossessions of others would only yield him the opportunity of making a trial. In short, according to the *very* old and thread-bare quotation, he freely

“Compounds for *shifts* he is inclined to,
By damning those he has no mind to.”

As to the Corn-law abolitionists—the Tee-total men, they of course saw through Sir Robert Peel’s speech at once, and detected all its hollowness and insufficiency; but there was balm in Gilead in the reflection, that “the Corn-laws were assuredly *doomed*,” since Peel, borne into power on the shoulders of their most uncompromising and fiercest advocates, began his term of office with a disturbance, under the name of a modification, of those laws. From this and other symptoms of divided and wavering counsels among the monopolist party, auguries of good hope and fresh encouragement to “Agitation” were plainly to be deduced.

The House dinners mentioned in the second extract as having taken place at the Reform Club, lasted some four or five weeks; and most pre-eminently stupid affairs they were, in so far as regarded—

“The feast of reason and the flow of soul.”

Very excellent dinners, most undoubtedly, *as dinners*; doing abundant credit to Monsieur Soyer's art and labours; he having condescended to put himself to trouble about them.

Beyond the opportunity thus given him for the display of his culinary talents, and the inconveniences of crowded dinner-parties, made up of men scarcely acquainted with each other, and belonging to all the various shades, sections, and subdivisions of what was called the Liberal party, no other result followed this galvanized attempt at sociality.

Referring again to the extracts from my rough notes of passing events, feelings, opinions, &c., it is scarcely to be described, the gloom that was cast over the popular mind in Ireland by the installation into office of the Conservative party; and the depression of the popular party was rivalled in intensity by the exultation of their

opponents, who fairly “ stopped at nothing” in the first exuberance of their rejoicings.

The high-sheriff of the county Fermanagh, when proceeding, according to the old custom, to meet the Judges of Assize, bedecked his servants and attendants in *orange and blue*—the colours of the ascendancy and exclusion party in Ireland, while they are the colours of the *Liberal* party at English elections. The Judges most properly, and with becoming dignity, refused to enter his carriage, when they had noticed this display. It was said afterwards, that the colours in question were really those of his livery, and not adopted for the occasion. But the conduct of the Judges was considered to have done them infinite credit under all and *under any* circumstances.

The same worthy, when sealing the returns to be sent up to Dublin with the names of the two Knights of the Shire chosen at the general election of 1841, did so with a large seal, on which was printed in conspicuous letters the following elegant aspiration—being one of the standard toasts of Orange orgies:—

“ *The Pope in the Pillory, in Hell,
Pelted with Priests by the Devil!*”

and an exceedingly well cut device was encircled by the inscription, representing the bearer of the triple tiara at a stake amid flames; while a respectable gentleman with horns, hoofs, and a long curly tail was taking dead aim at him with a poor priest brandished high in the air over his head.

These disgraceful absurdities were as the straws upon the stream, denoting the strength and direction of the dark and bitter current below. I will not go further into this disagreeable subject than to say that the concluding part of the extract referred to, does not upon recollection now, as it did not when I wrote it, appear to have any exaggeration about it. The poor *stipendiaries* there mentioned were particularly obnoxious to the little local despots among the unpaid magistracy, where they refused to join cause with the latter; and four or five of them were at once dismissed, not for any assigned or assignable fault, but under the pretence that they were unnecessary; and such hard measure dealt out to them, that they were required to start off at once, home by the *nearest and shortest route*, otherwise they were not to get the scant and limited *viaticum* to be

allowed to the more promptly obedient. This order was indeed relaxed shortly after, but only under the pressure of the general feeling of indignation which it had excited.

Meantime your Whigs, good easy men, were congratulating and complimenting Sir 'Robert Peel across the table of the House of Commons, upon the fairness and liberality of his government in Ireland; and Sir Robert, looking virtue itself, sat with meek and sober stateliness upon the Treasury bench, listening to and accepting all the glorification they chose to give him, as complacent and self-contented as Sir Charles Grandison himself.

The Parliament returned at the general election of the year 1841, was declared upon all hands, and with most edifying unanimity, to have been returned by the most enormous amount of bribery that had ever been known, even in England. There was a Parliament of one of the Edwards, or the Henrys, which is stigmatized in the legislative annals of the country as the *ignorant Parliament—Parliamentum indoctum*—an epithet which is said to have been earned for it by the pre-eminent want of knowledge and intelligence of those who were returned to serve in it. The

Parliament of 1841 should have taken place in English records as "*Parliamentum impurum*:" the Parliament sprung from the grossest and vilest corruption, the grossest "treating," and the most flagrant intimidation.

Not less than two millions and a half was the *lowest* estimate of the total of expenditure of both parties, Whig and Conservative, at this crisis of their contest. And both were said to be for the time thoroughly "*cleaned out*," in consequence of it.

Intimidation, too, was plentifully used chiefly on the unfortunate 50*l.* voters in the English counties, under the "Chandos" clause of the Reform Bill. And since the days of the consular elections at Rome there had never been seen such wholesale *feeding* of voters; and in all the days of England's electioneering history, never such mighty *drinking*—such potents willing of ale, gin, and beer,—at the expense, of course, of the plundered candidates; to whom, by a most just retribution, quite as little mercy was shown as they deserved. They had gone with their eyes (and *purses*) open into the discreditable conflict, and no one could regret that they suffered heavily for it, much as

the corruption of the instruments of their chastisement was to be detested and denounced. Roebuck—then, and until the last general election, member for Bath—had a fine field in the transgressions of these parties for the exercise of his peculiar fancy and talent for picking holes in his neighbours' coats. And he *did use* his opportunity most unmercifully.

Few men possess in so striking a degree, the dangerous and unhappy gift of sarcastic powers, as Mr. Roebuck. It is a dangerous and unhappy gift to its possessor, as it robs him of friends, while it procures for him plenty of applauders and backers at the moment: each man being glad to have the lash directed against his neighbours, and averted from himself. The effect of Mr. Roebuck's other talents—and they are not in small measure either as to quantity or quality—is grievously marred by this propensity to bitterness, and the likelihood of his ever attaining the position of a political leader rendered almost naught. Men like to be led, indeed, and it is said of political parties, at least in this country, that they do not object to having what sailors call a “*taut hand*” kept over them; or if they grumble,

still are found to submit to it far better than they would to a guidance attempted in milder, and more considerate fashion. But no man likes to be perpetually in hot water; and no man likes to be the butt of his leader's sarcasms: and whoever follows John Arthur Roebuck must make up his mind to both contingencies; for that gentleman is never — I will not say *contented*, for content and he have nothing in common—but is never in his glory, save when over the shoulders, and nearly over head, in the *hottest* water; and when he has not an opponent to assail, will turn his fine-edged and glittering steel upon a friend.

Mr. Roebuck's person, as well as manner and delivery, are well known; the former small and spare, but well formed; the head highly intellectual, but the countenance telling tales of the acrimony within. His voice is harsh, but clear; and his delivery a little too sharp and dogmatic to be altogether pleasing; while at the same time it is undoubtedly impressive and telling.

I had jotted down the following notice of his performances on the occasion of the bribery disclosures and confessions of the "*Parliamentum impure*" of 1841.

“Monday, May 9, 1842.—A strange and novel scene in the House of Commons last night of meeting (Friday). Roebuck, M.P. for Bath, got up according to notice, and put questions to several members, whom he accused, from common report, of having been parties in various compromises that are said to have lately taken place with regard to election-petitions—as in the case of Nottingham borough, where the Whig member, after having been declared by the Committee to have been ‘duly elected,’ has vacated his seat to leave an opening for ‘the last rose of summer,’—Walter of the Times; and other cases.

“Roebuck’s proceeding seemed to take the House completely by surprise. It was of a totally unprecedented and unexpected character. The members to whom he had put questions gave various answers; generally, however, declining to give him any information on the subject. The Tories and Sir John Hobhouse, (M.P. for Nottingham, and who is, unfortunately, scarcely to be excepted when Tories are spoken of,) refused the gentle request with high indignation, and great violence of bearing. Two Whigs, or Whig-

Radicals, confessed there had been bribery at their respective elections, but declared that they had nothing whatever to do with it, nor any cognisance of it at the time; and the most Whiggish of the pair made the further confession, that there had been a compromise entered into whereby he was to resign his seat in a certain time in favour of a Tory.

But he added, that he had not known any thing of it at the time, nor until it was *entirely arranged*; and that he did not at all like it." The House thoroughly believed this latter assertion; at the same time that there was no reason to discredit the former, the fact being well known that he had been put in by Lord ——, altogether at the noble lord's expense.

"A good deal of discussion followed that evening, with much inclination shown on the Whig as well as Tory side to *burke* the matter; but Roebuck, for once in his life, shows *judgment* as well as talent and boldness, and seems likely to drive them to the wall. The debate stands adjourned to this night or to-morrow."

Notwithstanding the Peachum and Lockit agreement of Whig and Tory, Roebuck succeeded in

getting a Committee of Inquiry into these matters. The only tangible results were, that some compromises were voided, including the one of which its victim had declared his ignorance and his *disrelish*; and that fresh and still more distinct evidence (and *confession*) than before was put on record, of the gross, disgusting, and shocking venality which stained a large proportion of the English returns to the “fourth *reformed* Parliament.”

“ *Monday, March 14, 1842.*—On Friday, Peel brought forward his financial plans. An income tax for England, with all its vexatious inquisitions and annoyance. The wealthy middle classes, who voted for the Tories, will now suffer for their hostility to liberal principles. A stamp tax, or increase of the existing tax, and an increase on spirits, for Ireland, as an equivalent; she being unable to bear an income tax.

* * * * *

“ Sir R. Peel took about three and a half hours in making his speech; beginning with a shorter string of schoolboy sentences than usual, and then going through details with great clearness certainly—but still *laboured clearness*. At the

end he lapsed into *schoolboyism* again: mouthing and delivering *ore rotundo* long sentences “signifying nothing,” or little else than nothing.

“If a ‘new member,’ or even an *old* one not of high rank or position, were to declaim in the way that he sometimes does, the offender would be very speedily and very *mercilessly* coughed down.

“*Monday, May 23, 1842.*—It is amusing to note the preparations for opposition to Sir Robert Peel’s proposed changes in the Customs Tariff. Each and every interest affected, or thinking itself likely to be affected, denounces the change in *its own case*, but can see *no objection* to its being tried in the case of *others*. Meantime Peel is going on—secure of his majority, varying indeed in its composition, but still *certain*: as Tories support him in the defective parts of his measures, and Liberals in the better parts.

“*Growlings* there are, however, in plenty at Sir Robert Peel, from quarters whence he drew his greatest strength; and very valorous declarations, somewhat to the tune of

“‘If ‘twere to do *again*—but ‘tis no matter!’

“All *moonshine!* They would support him again slavishly, were a dissolution to occur.

"It is hard to say when that may be, and when a change in affairs may come about. There is little of energy amongst the Liberal party, a considerable deal of mutual and miserable jealousy, and no *union* at all. The high Whigs want to advance as little as possible; the Chartists want to go very much too far and too fast; the intermediate Liberals are disputing the value and comparing the measure of their respective *crotchets*; and no two sections, out of the many into which they are split, agree with each other, or seem to have *any tolerance* for each other. Meantime that great body in the community, on whom the real hopes of England ought to have a resting-place,—THE PEOPLE, properly so called; *what* are *they* in England? *Slaves*—perfect and entire slaves! They have amongst them no principle of union, no great principle of action, no high objects implanted in their minds, no virtuous and self-sacrificing efforts at elections and other moments of trial; on the contrary, a sad and most deplorable readiness to accept bribes—a depraved exultation in having votes to sell. The bribery and corruption of the late elections in England, is now, by the press, the Parliament, and the public, con-

fessed and declared to have been the most flagrant that ever took place, *even in England*.

“ In fact, the House of Commons stands self-convicted and self-condemned; and we in Ireland, who have honestly and fairly returned a Liberal majority, are bound down and trampled upon by the representatives of bribery and corruption in England and Scotland. * * * *

“ *Tuesday, May 31, 1842.*—The poor little Queen *shot at* yesterday evening, being the *second* time! What a country!

“ The morning papers give scanty details, the inquiry being, as yet, kept secret. All that is known is, that he is one John Francis, a young carpenter, and that he fired, or some say flashed a pistol at her, at much about the same spot where Oxford fired at her before—viz., Constitution-hill. He is in custody, and under examination. Thank God! she is safe, and uninjured, I believe, even by fright.

“ The Houses adjourned on hearing the news, and so Peel’s Income-Tax was put off for its third reading to this day.

“ The Tariff is getting on through the House. Peel broaches the most *free-trade-ish* doctrines—

viz. that we should buy at the cheapest market, &c. &c., but cannot be got to apply them to the importation of foreign corn. His majority *grumble* away in and out of doors, and occasionally give a valiant kick; but it means nothing. Meantime, the way is being smoothed for the Whigs, when some lucky chance shall restore them to office. The great monopolies are shaken; the wedge has entered, although only a little way. Still, entered it *has*, and can ultimately be driven home.

* * * * *

“*Monday, July 4, 1842.—*Yesterday, *another* attempt to fire upon the Queen! A wretched little hunchback, of the same class of life as the two other scoundrels. The particulars of the investigation are not very accurately known. This third attempt naturally creates extreme excitement and indignation,—as it was only the evening before that the Queen had commuted the death-sentence of Francis to transportation.”

The total cessation of these infamous acts, after the offence had, by a short Bill passed hastily through both Houses by Sir Robert Peel, after the last attempt, been degraded from all the dig-

nity of treason to that of a felonious misdemeanour, punishable with bodily castigation, proved that they originated in a depraved passion for notoriety. It was the opinion of many, that had the first occurrence of the kind—the attempt of the potboy, Edward Oxford, in the year 1838 or 1839—not been so lightly treated as, for the party purpose of seeking to damage by ridicule the Whig ministry of the day, it had been by the Opposition, who laughed at the noise made about what they jeeringly called the "*Pot-house Plot*," the vagabonds who imitated Oxford's achievement would not have quite so confidently calculated upon impunity and a comfortable provision for life.

CHAPTER V.

COMMENCEMENT OF NEW EFFORTS.—PROVINCIAL REPEAL INSPECTORS.—
REPEAL-BRAND IN THE NORTH.—MR. RAY—HIS LABOURS IN THE
REPEAL ASSOCIATION.—HIS MEMORANDUM.—STATE PROSECUTIONS.
—EXTRACTS FROM THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S SPEECH.

THE jealous distrust and suspicion which centuries of misgovernment, betrayal and disappointment have ingrained into the minds of the Irish people, operated even in this, the second year of the revived agitation for the Repeal of the Union, to limit the extension of that agitation and restrain its efforts.

Mr. O'Connell determined upon trying a new plan, or a long *disused* one revived, for the purpose of stimulating, if possible, the agitation, during the autumn of 1842. He proposed to poor Tom Steele, to T. M. Ray, to O'Neill Daunt and to me, (we were his immediate *aides-de-camp*,) to go out each upon a separate mission to preach

up Repeal, and enrol members and "associates" from the remotest districts of the country, in the ranks of the Repeal Association.

It was arranged that O'Neill Daunt should undertake what might be called the "Home-circuit" of agitation, viz. Leinster; that Ray should lighten the labours of agitating in Munster, for my father; and that I should go to "the Land of the West," viz. Connaught. We were respectively dubbed "Repeal Inspectors" of the provinces that were to be the scene of our labours; and, besides the vote of the Association giving us our titles and powers, and with true *political* gratitude thanking us beforehand for services we were *expected* to render, were furnished each with a small portmanteau, well stuffed with political tracts, reports, &c. &c., to be distributed in such quantities, and to such localities and parties, as, in our wisdom, we should think most likely to forward our Repeal Propagandism.

The northern province, Ulster, was left *out of count*. Thereat mightily did rejoice the Orange organs of opinion in that province; and much they laboured to impress upon England the

importance of propitiating and remunerating them by special favours, and by concessions to their hankerings after that ascendancy which, in 1829, had seemed likely to be taken from them. If there be disgrace in endeavouring to avoid what would endanger the shedding of human blood, then were we disgraced by not having attempted to enter Ulster. If it were shameful cowardice to dread the loss of many lives in sanguinary brawls, without an object and without possible result, save disaster of all kinds, then were we guilty of that cowardice.

Mr. O'Connell always held that nothing worse could possibly occur,—nothing more tending to impede, and, perhaps, utterly to ruin the cause of “*Repeal*,” than that its advocacy should be made the subject of violent contention, bloodshed, and loss of life. So strongly was he impressed with this feeling, that on many and repeated occasions he forebore from pushing the agitation into parishes, and on more than one occasion into *counties* of the *South* and *West* of Ireland, where men's minds were not prepared for it; or, at any rate, where there was anything like a large and respectable minority arrayed against it.

"I want to *unite* Irishmen for 'Repeal,'" he was accustomed to say, upon such occasions, "and not to set them fighting about it."

It is true, that at a later period of the same year, 1842, he did himself adventure into the northern province, upon a Repeal errand. But it was sorely against his will, as against his judgment and earnest counsel. He had put every means in motion to wean the too ardent *Repealers* of the north from their project of inviting him up among them; but they persisted, and at length became so irritated at his arguing the matter with them, that most reluctantly, and entirely against his better judgment, as well as against the spirit of the policy which had ruled his whole political life, he had to yield, and to consent to visit—

"The Douglas in his hall!"

How he went, and what occurred before and during his expedition, I shall presently have to speak of, in due course; and, meantime, return to the earlier "going forth" of his three, or, rather, of his two, immediate satellites; Tom Steele not having set out till much later, and

Daunt and I being the first that "went upon our way *agitating*."

When the appointments I have mentioned, of the Provincial Repeal Inspectors, were made, Steele was held in reserve for the northern mission. Mr. Ray did not start upon his Munster course for two or three weeks after O'Neill Daunt and me.

Having alluded to T. M. Ray, I cannot avoid saying a few words as to his services and character, especially at this moment, when the distress of the country, and the unmerited distress in which he has himself been plunged, have united to deprive Ireland of a most faithful and singularly efficient public servant.

It was in 1830 that he first came under the notice of Mr. O'Connell, who, with that penetration and keen and almost intuitive appreciation of others that he possessed, at once saw that T. M. Ray was the man for his purposes. At that time the latter was only a "Deputy-assistant under-secretary," or some such thing, to the "Dublin Trades Political Union;" but was, in fact, *the* worker, and most practically efficient man of that body, then of considerable importance and influ-

ence in the electioneering and “agitating” affairs of the Irish metropolis. He drew their reports; he finished off their resolutions; he suggested the devices, &c. of their trade banners; and he not only composed the matter and substance of their documents, but displayed powers of penmanship that might have established him comfortably in London as a “Professor of the mighty art of *calligraphy*,” had his ambition leaned that way. Some of the addresses to my father at this period are extraordinary specimens of perfection in this line, and fairly rival the finest and most decorated specimens of copper-plate printing.

When the intermediate associations—intermediate between the Catholic and the Repeal Association—which we have noted in a former chapter, began to be established, Mr. Ray was installed in a subordinate office, at first, to poor Edward Dwyer, the respected and admirable secretary of the old Association; and when that excellent officer and good man had to retire from loss of health and strength, Mr. Ray continued as assistant to two or three “*Honorary Secretaries*,” who got the *honour*, while he had the *labour* of the office. At length, in 1840, on the establishment of the

Loyal National Repeal Association, he was made in name, what he had long been in fact and in labours, ~~the~~ secretary, and, as it were, "*stage-manager*" of the agitation.

In this office, the amount of work that he personally performed, the extraordinary and unremitting vigilance and efficiency of his superintendence over others, and the singularly clear, orderly, and methodical arrangement of all the details of the establishment, from the correspondence with Mr. O'Connell when out of town, down to the purchase of a box of wafers, astonished every one who had the opportunity of judging of them. There was not an occurrence, no matter how trivial, or in what remote part of the country it took place, that had any connexion with Repeal, during the eight years and upwards that he was in the office of secretary, which he had not recorded in one way or other, and of which he could not furnish, almost at a moment's notice, all the information that could be desired. Cash-books, day-books, ledgers, account books of all sorts and sizes, letter-books, books of members, of associates, of collectors, of Repeal wardens, Repeal inspectors, &c. ; books with the names, &c., of American contri-

butors, who, as citizens of a foreign state, could not be enrolled either as members, associates, or under any other designation as belonging to the Association; minute-books, *rough and clean*, of the general weekly meetings, and of the meetings, regular or irregular, of each and all the various Committees; books of record of principal transactions of the body; *scrap-books*, with the accounts of every meeting or other incident connected with "Repeal," cut from newspapers for years back, and pasted carefully in, in order of dates, with clear and accurate indexes to each volume; Repeal reports, tracts, speeches in pamphlet form, &c. &c.:— all these he attended to, and all these he had ready for inspection or reference at a moment's warning, and without the slightest confusion or delay.

The "staff" under him varied in strength according to the finances of the Association. At first some three or four, it gradually and necessarily became larger, until there were upon the books, in 1844 and 1845, some fifty or sixty individuals, all in full employment, all fully employed and imperatively required by the enormous mass of business the Association had in those years to transact, and all superintended vigilantly and

actively by Mr. Ray, in addition to the other duties of his office.

Having written to Mr. Ray to refresh my memory upon points connected with the details of the establishment over which he presided at the Corn Exchange, I have just received the following hasty notes, which, although it may be scarcely fair towards him to do so, I insert as I received them, believing that they will thus have more interest than otherwise :—

*Memorandum regarding the establishment and mode
of conducting business of Repeal Association.—
Drawn up by T. M. Ray.*

SECTION I.—THE STAFF.

In Sept. 1841, the Repeal staff consisted of nine persons; salaries 7*l.* 10*s.* weekly.

The Registry staff, viz., that for the county and city of Dublin, twelve persons; the salaries 21*l.* 4*s.* weekly.

We were then establishing the Dublin Corporation under the new law, and had a staff for this, while it lasted, of forty-three persons, salaries 55*l.* to 60*l.* weekly,

N.B.—There was no other body but the Association to undertake the task of encountering and overcoming the innumerable difficulties designedly left in the way of the enfranchised burgesses of Dublin.

Sept. 1842.—Staff of the Association seven persons; salaries 6*l.* weekly.

Registry ten persons; salaries 17*l.* 15*s.*

1843.—The Registry “Staff” was from twelve to fifteen persons, being still the staff for the city and county registry; salaries about 20*l.*

The Association assisted at other registries in special cases, but had no *staff* for them.

The working of the Association had increased to forty-eight persons; salaries about 40*l.* in the total, varying from 10*s.* to 30*s.* each person, and some one or two at 2*l.*

The same rate continued *nearly* until the middle of 1846, some reductions being made in 1845.

The above is exclusive of my [*T. M. Ray's*] salary, 300*l.* a-year, at the beginning of 1843,—(I think it was 4*l.* a-week previous)—400*l.* in 1843—reduced in 1847—and June 24, 1848, all hands were discharged, and I was *solus*—March 1849, *gone!*

SECTION II.—MODE OF CONDUCTING BUSINESS.

The mode of conducting the business was as follows :—

Between eight and nine o'clock each morning I got from the post-office our letter-box, with the letters, &c., of the day's post.

There averaged at the busy time about fifty or sixty daily, sometimes as many as two hundred, or even upwards.

The entire number of communications received, from first to last, including all upon general subjects, as well as letters bringing money remittances, was 59,115 *recorded*, besides *innumerable* others not of importance. 14,891 were on general subjects of local occurrence, grievance cases, &c., and did not contain remittances.

Immediately on receiving the letters, I set about opening and arranging them according to their different subjects.

I was so familiar with this process, from habit, that I could almost at a glance know to what class a letter belonged.

Sometimes a single communication would combine numerous heads—viz., money remittance,

inquiry, or demand respecting newspapers; proposal of persons to be wardens; application for cards, either as members or associates, or as both; suggestions, inquiries, or statements, as to news-rooms, and the Repeal news-room system generally; detail of grievances, &c. &c.

I wrote upon each letter when necessary a brief minute of instructions as to reply, &c.

Those of more intricate nature I answered myself: and it was my habit when the Liberator was in town, to take to him such as involved legal questions of nicety. He either instructed me himself how to deal with these, or, if they referred to documents too long for him to peruse, they were referred to some legal members of the Association for opinion and advice, &c., and the result duly communicated to the correspondents.

When the cashier had made his cash entries, the letters were taken through the other several departments, to have the requisites discharged,

1st. To the Newspaper department, where all orders, &c. regarding papers, were noted and attended to.

N.B.—The newspapers in question were of course those which were sent to districts contri-

buting ten pounds, according to the special rule in such cases. The contributors had their choice of the Pilot, Freeman, Weekly Register, and Nation.

2d. To the Warden, do. do.

3d. To the *Card-filling*, do. (That is, filling in names, dates, &c. on the respective cards.)

4th. To the Report and Document department, for supply of any printed books, reports, or documents required. This was a heavy office ; and the costs of postage and carriage of parcels was occasionally very high indeed, under this item.

5th. To the *Scrivenery* departments, to have letters, or extracts and documents copied for publication.

In connexion with this department there was an arrangement of some interest, viz. the *manifolding process*, whereby we were enabled in the periods of the greatest influx of communications to supply all the Irish and English journals by the same post, (generally on the day of meeting,) with separate copies of all documents read at the Association, and which it would otherwise have been impossible with any amount of staff to accomplish. We also supplied the Government reporter, who

regularly attended our meetings, and took full reports of our proceedings.

It was merely an extension of the process of copying by means of *black paper*, which had previously been in general use, to the extent of probably two or three copies. By a variety of experiments and contrivances, I succeeded in obtaining so many as seven or eight fac-simile copies at the *same time*, and very soon familiarized the copyists with the method.

We had besides constant copying of documents, reports, &c. in the usual manuscript, especially during the existence of what was called the "Parliamentary" Committee of the Association.

It was the duty of another department to collect together from the other sections the cards filled, diplomas for wardens, printed documents, &c. to be transmitted, together with the letters of acknowledgment and advice thereof, and to forward the same by post or other conveyance.

Our despatches at the height of our operations filled two, sometimes three large baskets each post.

I made each person write upon the letter-list or other document, as it passed through his hands,

a certificate or memorandum of having discharged the particular duty assigned to him regarding it, so that any neglect could be at once traced; but indeed the whole system was so regular, that very few complaints were ever made, as you yourself know.

The following are specimens of the kind of certificate I speak of.

No. 1.

200 Cards, filled 5th August, 1843.

viz. 180 Associates. 20 Members.

The "Associates" were the contributors of one shilling; the "Members" either contributed, or collected, one pound.

No. 2.

Freeman's Journal and Weekly Register ordered accordingly.

J. WALLACE. 5 August, 1843.

No. 3.

Prize Essays, Printed Reports, &c. &c. (mentioning the numbers of each) sent accordingly.

R. O'CONNOR. 5 August, 1843.

No. 4.

T. M. Ray wrote about this grievance case.

5 August, 1843.

No. 5.

Six "Volunteer" Cards filled. 5 August, 1843.

J. SMITH.

N.B. A "Volunteer" was a contributor, or a collector, of ten pounds Repeal Rent.

No. 6.

The several matters mentioned sent by post (or parcel).

6 August, 1843. R. O'CONNOR.

More or less of these certificates or memoranda were endorsed on the various documents coming to the Association, and not a few of them had the entire six.

I required of every person employed in the establishment that he should make a daily and particular entry of the nature of the business upon which he was employed.

At first each wrote his name as they arrived successively, in a day-book; but when the establishment increased largely, this could not be done within time, so that the method I took was to get each person to write his entry on a slip of paper.

These slips were pasted daily into guard-books, and formed the day-book of the business done.

There are thirty-three large volumes of these day-books.

I also established a system of fines for non-attendances, neglect, &c., unless excused by medical certificate.

I have before me a return of these fines for the year 1845; they amount to 15*l.* 17*s.* 8*d.* In every case at all deserving of it, these fines were subsequently restored, or made up for by a special donation.

THE LETTERS.

All letters sent were copied into letter-books, of which there are now sixteen volumes quarto of bank post paper.

When all requisites upon the documents were finally discharged, they were taken to the Filing department, and recorded in this manner:

The letters, lists, and documents, with money remittances, were pasted consecutively according to order of date into a set of *guard-books*, and the number corresponding with the number of the entry in the cash-book put on each.

These documents now comprise fifty-eight large *folio* volumes, each sixteen inches long, by ten inches wide, and seven or eight inches thick, and number from the first to the present 44,224 documents. They comprise also the original lists of the subscribers to each remittance, and were thence called the “**REPEALERS’ ROLL.**”

The letters received on general subjects were filed or pasted into quarto *guard-books* (letter size) in a similar way, and numbered consecutively from first to last. Of these there are forty quarto volumes, each six or seven inches thick, containing 14,891 letters. Of this class, were petty items of small amount, but these also had to be certified and vouched, and the vouchers preserved and produced to the auditors. No item, however small, even of a few pence, would be allowed without its due voucher.

All the vouchers of money-payments are in a similar manner pasted into *guard-books*, of which

there are now twenty-two similar folio volumes, each six inches thick; each voucher is numbered, corresponding with the number in the cash-book. There are in these books now 33,807 receipts of the payments from first to the present, varying in amount from some hundred pounds, to two or three pence each.

There are sixteen folio cash-receipt books, and twelve cash-payment books.

Two large ledgers of these accounts, separated under the several heads of expenditure.

The cash department was managed by a cashier and book-keeper, with assistants when required.

The current accounts were furnished monthly, and all matters of printing, stationery, &c. were furnished upon contracts according to estimates for, and selected by the Committee. Every item in those accounts was checked carefully; the accounts were presented at one meeting of the Committee, and ordered to be paid at the next meeting if found correct; but if any question arose, a sub-committee was appointed to investigate and report upon it, in case the Finance Committee itself did not specially undertake the matter at an adjourned sitting appointed for the purpose.

Nothing could be paid without this check, and process of examination before Committee, and an order made by them and signed by the chairman, and three members at least present: except in so far as it pleased the Finance Committee occasionally to allow a small margin of three or four pounds, or thereabouts, for casual expenses, that could not well be postponed until their ordinary day of meeting. These, however, were accounted for in the same way as the rest. In addition to the arrangements already mentioned, to ensure a record of the remittances, &c., a statement of them was posted into county and provincial ledgers; so that we could always know how much came from any county, parish, or district.

We had also a series of alphabetical parochial ledgers, one for each county; containing all particulars as to wardens, committees, reports, repeal reading-rooms, &c.

There were volunteers, members, wardens, alphabetical list-books, and books of American contributors, as distinguished from British subjects; none but the latter being enrolled either as members or associates.

And a variety of others kept constantly in use.

Every thing was under such a state of arrangement, that any letter, receipt, or other document from first to last could be referred to in an instant.

THE REGISTRIES.

Besides the foregoing, there was an extensive department to manage the registries. This was under the superintendence of Mr. Crean, and occupied a staff of fourteen or fifteen persons.

We also had occasional registry agents in several provincial localities paid by the Association, besides extensive voluntary assistance by professional gentlemen, locally and otherwise.

One important item must not be forgotten—the *Scrap-books*—the *Repeal Scrap-books*—of which there are some eight or ten volumes, containing newspaper slips pasted in, with reports of every occurrence, remotely as well as intimately, connected with the Repeal movement.

These books are in fact a complete political history of Ireland for the years from 1839 to 1849.

So far for the mechanism of the Association.

It was the result of much hard thinking, and of many experiments ere I succeeded in getting it to work to my own satisfaction. When I did so, it worked silently and comfortably, without trouble to the Committee; and when we were attacked in 1843-4, and thereafter, I had to tax my mind to devise new adaptions of the existing system, for the exigences of the instant; so as to conform to the decisions upon the law at the previous prosecutions. All this was not done without laborious attention and anxiety.

During the periods of the monster meetings we managed all the details of arranging for them; corresponded with, and directed the local secretaries and committee-men; revised the resolutions in most cases; got the *placards, &c. &c. printed,* and in every other way gave assistance.

In 1841 we carried out all the difficult details of establishing the Dublin Corporation under the new law. This was all under my superintendence, and I got sundry votes of thanks, and some compliments, for having accomplished this laborious and difficult task.

I may say that all movements connected with the furtherance of the people's cause throughout

the kingdom, were either originated and worked, or assisted by the Association.

Now that the Association is reduced to inactivity, everything else throughout the country has languished and fallen.

The grants in "grievance" cases ran up to a sum on the whole of between 30,000*l.* and 40,000*l.*; and a considerable amount of money besides was disbursed in paying the fees of counsel and agent, and travelling expenses, &c. where local cases of persecution, oppression, and suffering, were considered to require the interposition of the popular Association.

In this respect great service was rendered to the people; many flagrant cases of injustice being arrested in their course, or at any rate detected and exposed, and their promoters made to feel the censure of public opinion. And without doubt, the occurrence of other cases was prevented, by the wholesome fear which was produced in the minds of the projectors of evil, by the activity of the Association in dragging such iniquities to light.

Even upon the ruthless class of "Exterminators," that is to say, landlords and landlords'

agents, who remorselessly set about evicting by wholesale the inhabitants of entire districts of land, there was a check imposed by the consciousness that a body existed who were watching their heartless proceedings, and would denounce them to the execration of all humane minds.

It was to this efficiency of the Repeal Association for the protection of the people, that the extreme hostility is owing, which the taskmasters and oppressors of the people of Ireland, whether Whig or Tory, have always manifested towards that Association ; and still, notwithstanding the suspension of the latter's proceedings, continue to declare on every possible occasion.

Mr. Ray's notes thus continue :—

“ As to the COMMITTEES.

There was the General and Finance Committee, consisting at the zenith of about 150 members. Of these the great majority were constantly active in the cause, and constantly attended the Committee when not absent from Dublin on local duties, or in the cases of members of Parliament, when not attending their duties as such.

The Committee had one regular day of meet-

ing, (Thursday in each week); but hardly a week passed without one or two additional meetings—sometimes one daily, when there was a press of business.

They investigated all matters of finance, audited all the accounts every week. These were besides submitted to, and investigated by the regular auditors about once a month.

They dealt with the passing questions of the day as those affecting the cause of Ireland.

I attended the meetings, and managed all details arising.

There was next the *Parliamentary Committee*, meeting almost daily during the session, for the purpose of examining, and reporting specially on all parliamentary documents, proceedings, &c. A member of this committee generally acted as secretary *pro tem.*—sometimes I did whenever I could. They had a committee-clerk, and one or two assistants. Some of their reports were merely read at the Association, and went through the papers, but were not collected in volumes.

Then there were the Sub-committees on various subjects, at various times. Among them were the following, viz.

Committees on Manufactures—Grievances—Poor-

law abuses — Extermination — Employment — Finance, &c. &c. &c.

You know best about these, for you worked most of them, and no man ever worked harder.

The operative departments of the office were in requisition to transact all details of copying work, &c. arising from these several Committees.

J. Brown, the printer, got a good deal to do by the Parliamentary Committee.

Then there was the *Musical Department*; will you say anything about that?

And the '82 Club?

This was in its constitution a distinct body, but our 'staff' had to do all the detailed work of it."

In answer to Mr. Ray's query, I will state that the "musical department," as he styles it, originated, according to my recollection, with Mr. Davis, who was exceedingly desirous that the Repeal Association should manifest a sympathy with, and a desire to encourage native talent and native art, in every branch and department. Mr. Smith O'Brien originated the idea of a band to be raised, taught, and maintained at the expense of the Association; which was accordingly done, and

a set of excellent instruments provided: the same which were disposed of at the Conciliation Hall auction the other day, at prices averaging about one-twentieth of their original cost.

The '82 Club, as Mr. Ray mentions in the foregoing notes, was entirely a distinct body from the Association; but having no *local habitation*, though it had a "name," the arrangement of the details of its working fell, like everything else, upon Mr. Ray and a few of his assistants. The idea of this Club was started during my father's absence at Darrynane Abbey, after our release from imprisonment in September, 1844. It was established to commemorate the great achievement of the year 1782; when by a unanimity of purpose and determination on the part of all classes in Ireland, unhappily too rare in our miserable annals, the encroachments of England upon the rights, powers, and privileges of the Irish Parliament, were put an end to; and the entire legislative independence of the Irish nation was asserted and vindicated; and, as men thought at the time, established finally and irreversibly.

The Club in question wore a uniform of much the same pattern and decorations as that worn on occasions of ceremony by the minor officials of

Government; but of a green colour instead of blue, and without a sword. This dress was also designed by the parties who originated the Club, and has since cut a figure in the unhappy State prosecutions of last year; some of the counsel for the Crown having shown a disposition to consider the mere fact of possessing such habiliments, as "flat burglary," to say the least.

The Club itself was an *exotic* in agitation. It had a sickly, rickety existence for a year and a half, and then disappeared from amongst the things that are, leaving nothing but old coats and tarnished embroidery behind.

I turn again to Mr. Ray's hasty memoranda:—

"Now as to the PUBLIC MEETINGS. These were held weekly, on Mondays. Seldom a special one, but sometimes.

We had often to call in additional hands for copying on meeting days.

The greatest press of letters was upon these days, for the people held back their remittances to the end of the week to make the display on Mondays; and no appeal we could frame—and we tried it a hundred times—could get them to alter their practice in this respect.

On the meeting days I was seldom or never able to examine all the letters prior to the meeting, but had to read and note many of them *while the meeting proceeded.*

I had two or three persons in attendance going back and forward to the clerks' office as documents were to be extracted, or copied in manifold, and brought down — when so done.

I never allowed any document to be read without first examining it, to see if it contained anything improper, or questionable; and I am so far fortunate, that in my hands nothing ever escaped to the detriment of the Association, or any of its members. It was not always, however, easy to get individual members who had received letters to be read in the hall, to adopt the same precautions; and hence difficulties sometimes arose, or were aggravated.

The business of next day after the meetings was, to record the proceedings, to prepare returns of cash received for publication, and discharge any unanswered queries, &c.; fill up and send off by post the cards applied for from the country, according to the amount of the several subscriptions, &c. &c.

The Minutes of the Proceedings of the Association now comprise ten volumes, containing also printed copies of all reports, letters and documents ordered to be entered on the Minutes.

Those of the Committee, eight volumes, exclusive of Sub-committee Minutes, and some odd scraps.

Then there were conferences, audiences, local meetings, squabbles to be appeased, &c. &c. daily occurring, which took plenty of your time and the Liberator's. I, myself, lost a couple of hours every day this way.

Then recollect all the reports we drew up and issued, for long before as well as during and after the existence of the Parliamentary Committee.

T. M. RAY,

Late Secretary of the Association."

Having thus given Mr. Ray's summary sketch of the machinery and working of the Association, we shall append to it the account of the same as given by a very different authority, the Irish Attorney-General of Sir Robert Peel's Government, in January, 1844, when making his opening speech at the State Prosecutions of that year,

against my father, myself, and others. I omit the comments which accompanied the statement, as they were but of the usual description with which a lawyer assails the conduct of the party opposed to his client; and as they were proved to have been utterly unwarranted, not a single point which was attempted to be made against the Association having been ultimately established.

The extract will serve the purpose of filling up any chinks in the statement contained in Mr. Ray's hastily-written notes.

*Extract from Speech of Attorney-General Smith,
(at present the Master of the Rolls in Ireland,)
in the case of the Crown against O'Connell and
others.—Hilary Term, 1844.*

“ It will now be necessary for me to bring before you the general nature of the constitution of this Association. It consists of associates, members, and volunteers. The class of associates was established with this view, to have some portion of those who were connected with the Repeal Association liable to pay but very small subscriptions to extend the organization throughout the

country, and make it to include, as far as might be, all the poorer classes. Accordingly, Gentlemen of the Jury, the associate has only to pay one shilling. A card is given to him (of which I hold a specimen in my hand) which answers all the purposes, without coming within the express language of the Act of Parliament against passwords and signs. It enables each person who shall possess himself of one, to show it, and thus to establish to his neighbour the fact, that he has become connected with the Loyal National Repeal Association.

There is nothing very particular upon this card. There is a representation of a shamrock at the top of it, with the words *Catholic*, *Protestant*, and *Dissenter* with a motto underneath it, viz.—*Quis separabit?* Then, there is the date of the year, '1782,' of which I shall presently speak. Lower down, and near the bottom of the card, is a view of what is now the Bank of Ireland, in College Green, formerly the Irish Parliament House, with the words or motto, '*It was, and shall be!*'

Gentlemen, the next class in this Association are what are called properly, MEMBERS.

The *members* are those who pay twenty shillings a-year as their subscription to the funds and purposes of the Association. Or, if an ‘associate,’ who paid a shilling for himself, takes the trouble of collecting twenty other shillings, (*nineteen* with his own,) that, also, entitled him to be styled a ‘member,’ as fully as if he had paid the entire sum of twenty shillings out of his own pocket. To these ‘members,’ (whether paying the pound themselves, or merely collecting it,) a card was issued as a bond of union between them and the Repeal Association; and to the card in question, it is my duty now to direct your particular attention. Gentlemen, in one part of this card, you will find the words, in large letters and figures—

‘CLONTARF, 23d April, A.D. 1014,’
and in the opposite corner—

‘Benburb, 5th of June, 1645.’

At the bottom, in one corner, an Irish name, (Biálanathabuidhé) which, being interpreted, signifies

‘The Mouth of the Yellow Ford, 10th August, 1598,’
and in the other corner at the bottom—

‘Limerick, 9th to the 31st of August, 1690.’

Now, Gentlemen, on one of the pillars at the side of this card, there is a statement of the geographical size of Ireland, contrasting it respectively with the kingdoms of Portugal, Norway, Naples, Denmark, and several other states, such as Greece, Switzerland, Holland, and Belgium, &c. The comparative population is also given, and the card then draws attention to the fact, that Ireland has not a parliament; while all these countries that are mentioned in comparison with her, have more or less the management of their own affairs. The card then goes on to state the yearly revenue, the exports and imports of Ireland: the sums supplied by her during the last great war with France. It states that the first and greatest general, and two-thirds of the men and officers of the English army and navy during that struggle, were Irishmen; and then it reiterates that 'Ireland has not a parliament.'

There are two flags upon the card—the one with the shamrock, exhibiting the same inscriptions and motto as that which I have already described to you, as upon the associates' cards. Upon the other flag is a device, which is described as the sun bursting from behind a cloud, which

I believe was the ancient banner of Ireland. In the middle of the card is a map of this country; and I now pray your particular attention to what appears upon the scroll which is drawn at top. It is as follows:—

‘Resolved unanimously—

That a claim of any body of men, other than the KING, LORDS AND COMMONS OF IRELAND, to make laws to bind this kingdom, is ILLEGAL, UNCONSTITUTIONAL, and a GRIEVANCE.

*Resolution of the Dungannon Volunteers,
15th February, 1782.'*

This then is the card of the members of this body:—

* * * * *

Gentlemen, there is in this Association another class of persons of a higher rank than the members; they are such individuals as have subscribed, or else have collected ten pounds Repeal rent; and who thereby, according to a special rule of the Association, are entitled to the denomination of *Volunteers*. And I hold in my hand a card which I shall exhibit to you, being one of the cards of these volunteers. Upon it is engraved—

‘*Volunteers of 1782, Revived.*’

It is signed at foot, Thomas Matthew Ray, Secretary, being one of the traversers in this case. There is at the head of this engraving a likeness of Mr. O'Connell. There is also one of the late Mr. Grattan—one of the late Mr. Flood; also representations of the two O'Neills, Hugh O'Neill and Owen Roe O'Neill—of General Sarsfield, and of Brien Borhormbe, monarch of Ireland.

Such having been the three great classes of persons connected with the Association, namely, associates, members, and volunteers, it was considered advisable for the better organization of the people of the country, that there should be certain agents of the society to superintend and keep them in communication with the central body. And accordingly there were appointed provincial Repeal inspectors, baronial inspectors, inspectors of Repeal wardens in minor districts, Repeal wardens and collectors. The Repeal wardens, according to the rule of the Association, were to be appointed at the recommendation of the clergyman of their particular parish. They were to be appointed upon his recommendation as I have said, but only *by* the Repeal Association itself. And

there were issued to each of those Repeal wardens thus nominated and appointed, a book of instructions as to the nature and extent of their duties. This book is entitled—

‘Instructions for the Appointment of Repeal Wardens, and of Collectors of the Repeal Fund, and the Duties of the same.’

In this book, the ninth duty of the Repeal wardens is set down to be—

‘To take care that there should be transmitted from the Association to each locality a weekly newspaper for every two hundred associates: or a three-day paper for every four hundred associates, enrolled in each locality as the case may be. The sum of ten pounds collected and forwarded to the Repeal Association, entitles the Repealers of the district sending that remittance to a weekly paper for the entire year; and the sum of twenty pounds entitles them to the Pilot or Evening Freeman (being three-day papers) for the same period, if they prefer them to two weekly papers.’

And the tenth duty of the Repeal wardens is—

‘To have the newspapers to which each parish or district may be entitled put into the hands of such persons as may give the greatest circulation

to their contents: so that each paper may be read by, and its contents communicated to as many people as possible, for the purpose of circulating the proceedings of the Repeal Association, and other repeal news by access to the newspapers. And in order to the better transacting of general business, it is recommended that wherever there is a sufficient number of Repealers enrolled, the wardens and collectors shall provide a convenient room to meet in.'"

Such was the description given of the machinery of the Repeal Association by Mr. Attorney-General Smith when prosecuting some of its members in 1844.

The fanciful devices on the cards which he thus described were nearly all put on them in 1843, at the suggestion, and on the motion of the late Mr. Davis, and the young gentlemen acting with him. Up to that time Mr. O'Connell had taken particular pains to keep the cards as plain in form and style as possible; to make them, in short, be more in the nature of receipts for the money paid in to the Repeal funds than as any thing else. The reason will be inferred from the remark of the

Attorney-General, as to avoiding "the express language of the Act of Parliament against pass-words and signs." The additions made in 1843, by the banners, engravings of Irish "worthies," &c. did not make the cards transgress the boundary here alluded to ; but they rendered them less unimpeachable to a dexterous prosecutor. Mr. O'Connell never relished them much, but as there was no positive illegality, he did not like to offer any opposition to the wishes of Mr. Davis and his friends, and accordingly the additions were made.

In dwelling upon the "Instructions to Repeal Wardens," the Attorney-General took care not to allude to the prominence given in them to the point of *keeping the peace and observing the law*, and of seeing that others did the same. Nothing was so strongly and strictly enjoined as this; nor more frequently repeated. He was in court, however, as the mere retained lawyer of the prosecution, and of course used counsel's privilege to suppress everything that was at all favourable to the opposite party ; and to exaggerate and aggravate whatever was capable of being misinterpreted or wrested to a damaging purpose.

If the reader's patience will bear with a very brief examination and discussion of the State Trials themselves, which I shall presently approach, it will not be difficult to show how utterly untenable were the charges made against the agitation and against the chief mover of it, the Arch-agitator, Daniel O'Connell.

CHAPTER VI.

REPEAL MISSIONS.—MULLINGAR.—DR. CANTWELL.—NEW CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL.—CARRICK-ON-SHANNON.—BOYLE.—ROCKINGHAM.—SCENERY.—CASTLEREA—ITS CHURCH.—CASTLEBAR.—BALLINASLOE FAIR.—PROPOSAL TO WAYLAY MR. O'CONNELL.—OTHER ATTEMPTS TO DESTROY HIM.—FEARGUS O'CONNOR.—MR. O'CONNELL'S PRESENCE OF MIND.—THE DUBLIN PRESS.—MEETING AT THE ROYAL EXCHANGE—COMPELLED TO ESCAPE.—THE “NATION”—YOUNG IRELAND.—THOMAS DAVIS.—SMITH O'BRIEN.—GAVAN DUFFY.—THE YOUNG IRELANDERS.—REPEAL DISCUSSION.—SPEECH OF MR. O'CONNELL.

UPON the 12th of September, 1842, Daunt and I set out upon our Repeal missions, and had a weary eight hours *drag* of it in the Royal Canal *fly-boat*—so denominated because of its going at a most snail-like pace. Mullingar was our resting-place for the night, where his lordship, Dr. Cantwell, the Catholic Bishop of Meath, most kindly received us. Next day we jingled across the country over a most villainous road, up one hill and down another to Ballymahon, where we arrived after only one break down on the way. The Right Reverend Dr. O'Higgins, Catholic Bishop of Ardagh, here extended his hospitality to us;

and we involuntarily gave him a very bad return for his great kindness, by being the occasion of an enormous crowd assembling in the evening outside his door and on his lawn, with bonfires and a band of music;

“Breathing most eloquent discord !”

Speechifying from the window over the portico became the order of the night ; and a very excellent Repeal meeting was thus improvised for us, and carried out in every way most satisfactorily.

Next morning, we being near the bounds of our respective provinces, Daunt and I parted, he remaining behind in not the best condition in the world for *agitating*, inasmuch as he was suffering under a very severe *sore throat*. At Longford, breakfasted, and snatched a moment to see the very fine and extensive Catholic Cathedral, then about two or three years in progress of building, and not yet near completed. It is of Grecian architecture of the most chaste and correct taste, and is in the form of a Greek cross, with at the end a vestibule—whereby hangs a tale. A poor old countrywoman who went to see the new building much about the time of my visit, was highly delighted with the vestibule, and passed the follow-

ing comment upon it, and upon the vast space beyond, then enclosed by the yet roofless walls of the intended Church raised about twenty feet from the ground.

“ Oh, what a darling *little chapel*, and what a beautiful ber-rin’ place (burying-place) that is, *just back of it!*”

At the time I saw the rising cathedral, a prophecy concerning it had just been fulfilled, greatly to the disconcerting of the soothsayer. He was a Clergyman of the Established Church, of very ultra-ascendancy politics, and exceedingly wrath with “the Papists” at their audacity in no longer contenting themselves with the wretched mud hovel in which the sacred mysteries of their religion had from the time of the Penal Laws been celebrated, but aspiring to build and possess a church, larger than any the State religion could boast of in the province. Unfortunately for him, his way in and out of Longford town, lay directly by the front of the “Papists’” new cathedral; and it was a standing source of amusement with the people, to watch the gesture of infinite disgust which he invariably betrayed whenever he passed the obnoxious structure. One day he took par-

ticular notice of the observation to which he was thus subjected ; and in the height of his anger the spirit of prophecy came upon him.

“ Ay,” said he, “ it’s all mighty fine. You think you are great fellows to be building so big a church: but I tell you that the first sermon that is preached in it, will be by a Protestant minister !”

His words came literally true ! A sermon for a charitable purpose was preached in 1842 within the roofless enclosure, and by a much-respected gentleman in the Orders of the Church of England—the Honourable and Reverend George Spencer, brother of the late, and uncle to the present, Earl Spencer. Unhappily for the prophet, the Rev. Gentleman was then for some years a convert to the Catholic Faith, and had recently received Priest’s orders in the Church of Rome !

At Carrick-on-Shannon, where I arrived upon the evening of the 13th of September, I was at length on *my own* ground, and my labours were to begin. On the next day there was a great gathering of the people on the market-place, around a hastily-constructed hustings ; and hence several of the local orators and myself had to make

speeches for three or four hours by Carrick-on-Shannon clock. A public dinner in the market-house appropriately wound up the proceedings of the day; and all went merry at it as a marriage bell! I had for the first time to unload my *pack*, and commence distributing the Repeal tracts, pamphlets, &c. with which our Committee had entrusted me for the purpose. And this and all other occurring duties being most punctually discharged, I got to bed early *next* morning, heartily fagged with the first day of the campaign.

Note-book resumed—

“ Friday, September 16, 1842.—Engaged all the morning writing my first grand *Report* as *Repeal Inspector*, and letters of various kinds. Also in receiving visits. Off at noon on Bianconi’s car to Boyle, greatly *shouted* at starting, by the people: not a little to the disgust and discomfiture of a stiff and pinched-up sort of personage upon the same side of the car with me—with the Boyne water and William the Third in his very look. We did not, however, come to scratching faces during our drive. At Boyle, — and I left the high-road, hiring a car to take us a cross-route; and a cross-route it certainly was, through the

village of French Park to Ballaghaderreen, in the county of Mayo. Passed Lord Lorton's beautiful domain of Rockingham on this route, and some of the most noted sheep-walks of the sheep-feeding county of Roscommon, and arrived at our abiding place by 6 P.M. No fish for our dinner on this fish-day, so we had to make shift otherwise. Fried eggs for first course, boiled eggs for second, besides a running accompaniment of toast and butter; and then (the people having gathered under the windows), we had by way of *dessert*, a little *specification* with a bonfire of green wood directly under our noses!

“ In the evening to the Parish priest's to tea, (the Rev. Mr. Tighe,) escorted by our late auditory. Returned after a pleasant hour and got to bed, where I had the serenade of a rusty sign-post in a high wind, and was “ lulled by soft zephyrs” through the rickety window-frames. My comrade had pretty much the same experiences in his room. But we did very well; and the poor woman of the house left nothing untried to make us comfortable.

“ *Sunday, 18th.*—An extremely good parochial Repeal meeting on the outskirts of the village of

Carra Castle, County Mayo, Mr. Phillips of Clonmore House, J. P. &c. in the chair. Great spirit amongst the people, and most martyr-like attention to our three or four hours *speechifying*! A wild, dreary, desolate country, *scrubby* fields, loose stone fences, wretched cabins, and a very poor looking population. About Carrick-on-Shannon, and from thence on through Boyle on my way here, and nearly as far as Ballaghaderreen, there was a good deal of interesting and some fine scenery, but I now seem to have gotten into the wilds. The high-roads very good, where *they are above water*, several of them being flooded; but let no unhappy wight adventure himself upon the cross-roads, for they are truly *cross-roads*! And above all, let him carefully eschew all *short-cuts*; no matter how fair seeming, or how strongly recommended by his driver. Otherwise sorely will he rue, in his sides and all his bones, his unhappy facility of disposition! I speak *avec connaissance de cause*.

“ The next stage of my journey, after leaving the very hospitable house of Mr. Phillips, where two days passed merrily over, forming one of those pleasant interludes that occasionally relieve the

hard, dry work of agitation, was Castlerea, in the county of Roscommon, where I expected to receive answers to all the letters written respecting further meetings, and so to be able to arrange the plan of my campaign.

“With the single break of a short trip to the town of Roscommon, not more than six or seven miles distant, to arrange there for a Repeal meeting at a later period, I had little to occupy me after the first day in Castlerea, where I spent a weary week. By a mistake I left it before the preparations for the Tuam meeting were brought to completion, and I had accordingly a further delay in that town. The meeting, however, proved well worthy of being *waited for*.”

The Catholic church of the town, the cathedral of the Catholic archdiocese of Tuam, is a small but very striking specimen of the florid Gothic,—the work of a native architect, and one who, I believe, was never out of the province of Connaught in his life. It reflects infinite credit upon him, and upon the zeal and piety of the Catholic population of the archdiocese. It is not for me to praise the admirable exertions in this as in every other good work of the truly admirable Archbishop, his Grace Dr. MacHale, without whose

energy and judicious and enlightened superintendence the sacred building never could have been what it is. His personal kindness and condescending attention to me while in Tuam, I can never forget.

After this I had a wild and toilsome and lengthened day's journey to Castlebar, to attend a great meeting there, and another to get back in time for the Roscommon meeting. It is inconceivable, save by actual experience, what bleak desolation one sees on every side in the remote regions of the west, and what poverty among the people. The year 1842 was not a particularly bad year in that district, and yet the misery was heart-rending to witness. What it has been during the last two years, and *is* unfortunately at this moment, human language cannot describe!

The near approach of the celebrated 'Ballinasloe Fair,' with all its pre-occupying arrangements, warned me to cut short my mission, and accordingly I arrived in Dublin early in October, to make report in person to the Association.

"Repeal" lingered on during the rest of the year 1842, not making much progress, but yet not losing ground. The country missions, especially those of my brother "Inspectors-General!" who

PROPOSAL TO WAYLAY MR. O'CONNELL. 201

had better roads and means of travelling than Connaught supplied, and no "Ballinasloe Fair" to run away from, began to bear fruit towards the end of the year; and one point at least was said to have been gained, viz. the removing much of the ingrained suspicion which I have before alluded to as existing in the popular mind, with regard to our sincerity of purpose.

It was, I find, in the autumn of 1841, and not of 1842, that my father made the expedition I have previously alluded to, on "Repeal" agitation business, to the city of Belfast.

The invitation came from the hearts of the ardent Repealers of that city, and therefore the faults of judgment might well be excused. But the consequences were injurious to the interests of the Repeal cause in the north, and narrowly escaped being fatal to the man whom it was sought to honour. A magistrate of the County Down told the late Mr. Davis, by whom the circumstance was communicated to my father, that a plan had been arranged among a party of Orangemen, some of them in the rank of gentlemen, to watch for the arrival of his carriage at a spot on the Belfast road, where high earthen banks over-

hung the way, and when it came within reach, to hurl large stones down upon it, and kill and crush all whom it might contain!

There were also other devices in progress, of various details, but with the same fell purpose. Mr. O'Connell disarranged them all by starting two days earlier than he was expected, having previously taken the precaution of getting one of his chosen travelling companions, (who were poor Tom Steele, Charles O'Connell, Esq., of Ennis, and Nicholas Markey, of Louth—men whose devotion to him was long known and proved,) to write on beforehand, under an assumed name, to order horses to be ready at all the posting stages.

Twice before in his life had attempts at destroying, or at least seriously injuring him, been conceived and baffled. In the first, somewhere about the year 1825 or 1826, it had been arranged, that as he changed horses in the town of Castlewellan, County Down, on his way to attend a northern assizes, in a case for which he had received a special retainer, the armed Orangemen of the district should pour into the town, and, taking occasion of some *got-up* riot with the Catholic peasants who were known to intend

meeting him there, to use their arms, and in the confusion to shoot him dead. This was hastily whispered to him by a Catholic shopkeeper, just as he drove up to the door of the inn where the horses were to be changed.

"For God's sake, don't stop at all—don't stop one moment, Mr. O'Connell. The Orangemen are pouring in; go on with the horses you have."

A word to the postilions—poor *Papists* themselves—was enough; and away the carriage went, with the jaded horses lashed into a gallop. "The more haste the less speed," says the old adage, and it held true on this critical occasion. Just as the carriage left the town, and was rapidly descending a steep hill, one of the horses fell, and the other three tumbled in a heap over him, smashing pole and harness all to fragments. Mr. O'Connell was inclined to remain by the vehicle, while his servant should go back to the town to procure the other horses and a pole; but the servant literally would *not permit* him. This was a man of singularly high feeling and devoted attachment to my father, and of the purest character in every respect. For upwards of twenty years, until his death in 1834, he most faithfully served my father,

and attended him more with the care of a devoted and affectionate clansman and fosterer of the olden time, than with that of a mere servant, however zealous and attentive. Only twice in the year was he ever known of himself to speak to my father, and those occasions were on Christmas and Easter days, when he saluted him in the morning with the good wishes of the season.

This faithful creature literally *insisted* on being left by himself. "They will do nothing to me, Sir," said he, in answer to remonstrance: "I am a servant. Do you take the pistols and go on!—Go on, Sir—or *I will leave your service for ever!*"

His master had to submit, and accordingly proceeded with Nicholas Markey through some plantations which enabled them to cut off a large angle of the road. Meantime the truth of the stories they had been told was evidenced by the signal shouts, whistles, &c. &c. that were beginning to be heard on every side as the Orangemen gathered from various quarters towards the spot the travellers had so lately left; and when the carriage overtook the latter about half-an-hour afterwards, the valet reported that he had been surrounded, and pretty closely questioned by

armed countrymen, who had then gone off towards the town, conceiving that their intended victim might have returned thither. Of course they had not inflicted the slightest injury on the valet, although sorely vexed at missing their mark.

The second attempt at doing Mr. O'Connell bodily injury, occurred some few years previous to his Belfast expedition. The first posting stage out of Limerick, on the Dublin road, is that of Birdhill, being about ten miles of an exceedingly good road. On his return from one of his annual visits to Darrynane Abbey, Mr. O'Connell had, as usual with him, slept in the city of Limerick, and started early next morning, fortunately with four good horses, who kept at an even gallop the whole way to Birdhill. The good fortune of the circumstance was not on account of the trifling gain of time, but on the more serious account, that on the carriage "bringing up" at the inn-door at Birdhill, the discovery was made that the pins of all four of the axletrees of the wheels had been tampered with, apparently by filing them half through. All but one of them had broken across at the damaged part; and nothing but the speed and straight driving of the postilions pre-

vented two or three of the wheels from coming off upon the way. Who were the artificers of this attempt there never have been any means of knowing.

Stones were thrown in at the windows of a room where Mr. O'Connell was received in Belfast, at a kind of political *soirée*, and some ladies of the party seriously injured. The front windows of the hotel at which he was staying were also demolished by the valiant and peaceable heroes of the Boyne Water. Other violences were also manifested; and, on Mr. O'Connell's departure for Donaghadee, where he was to take the mail-steamer for Downpatrick, on his way to the north of England, whither he had been invited to attend some Reform demonstrations, he had to be escorted by a considerable body of police, who saw him safe on board.

In England, there was a new danger. Feargus O'Connor, from the moment that the fact of an invitation to Mr. O'Connell had become public, employed his newspaper week after week, in inviting the Chartist to meet the man who had denounced their violence, and kept the Irish people from making common cause with them;

and to visit him with some mark of their displeasure, when he should arrive at the scene of the intended Reform gatherings.

"Brother Chartists," wrote the redoubtable Feargus in his journal, number after number, "I have given you many days; do you now give *me* one day. Meet O'Connell, who denounced you," &c. &c.

Whether they fully obeyed these exhortations, or what were to be the "marks of displeasure" with which they were invited to visit the offending individual thus pointed out to them, history sayeth not. A fortunate accident, or couple of accidents, delayed Mr. O'Connell's arrival for nearly forty-eight hours; and so deranged all preparations, whether of a friendly or a hostile nature, that may have been made to receive him. The packet reached Port Patrick at dead low water of a spring tide, and his carriage could not be landed till after half-flood. And when at length he had got in motion, and had made some forty or fifty miles of his *journey*, the vehicle broke down, and occasioned a much longer delay.

Thus, both in Ireland and in England, from Irish Orangemen, and their counterparts in

violence and intolerance, the English physical-force Chartists, he had been threatened and imperilled almost simultaneously, and had escaped by what appeared to his family little else than an interposition of a merciful Providence.

On each of the occasions I have narrated, he manifested the coolest, most collected and resolved courage, cheerfulness and presence of mind. These qualities were, also, most strikingly demonstrated on yet another difficult and still more perilous occasion, a year or two before the Repeal agitation was resumed. The unhappy and disastrous combination-system, that has worked such mischief and misery among the artisan-population of England and Scotland, has not failed to add its quota of ruin to the other depressing causes that have crushed down industry in the towns and cities of Ireland. Some very bad cases of violence and outrage have occurred in Dublin under this unhappy system; but it is only justice to say, that they have been rare, as compared with what appears on the criminal records of the seats of manufacturing industry in Great Britain.

At the time I am now alluding to, a sudden

spring and stimulus appeared to have been given to the Dublin trade-combinations; and very alarming symptoms of misconduct and resolute mischievousness had manifested themselves. A large proportion of the Press of Dublin were paralysed in their efforts to stay the evil, by combinations among the operatives engaged in some of the newspaper offices. One journal, an ultra-Orange organ, actually sided with and took the part of the combinator. In this state of things, alarm and confusion in every one's mind, and the whole current of business impeded and disturbed, Mr. O'Connell came forward, and, although well aware that he was forfeiting much of political support, the operative tradesmen of Dublin having always been warmly in favour of a Repeal of the Legislative Union, he strongly and uncompromisingly denounced their conduct, and warned them of the penalties and dangers they were incurring. A large proportion of their number, who had either never joined the combinator, or had been only temporarily misled by them, approved his efforts, and attended to his voice; but the turbulent and the noisy in this, as in other matters, made theirs appear the pre-

vailing sentiment, and adopted active measures of annoyance ; hooting him in the streets, and interrupting and throwing into confusion and violent disorder the meetings he attempted to hold for the purpose of arguing the point with them. It became necessary, in the opinion of his family and friends, if not in his own, that he should be attended when walking in the streets, and particularly on the occasion of the last discussion he attempted to have with the combinators.

This took place in a large upper room of the Royal Exchange buildings in Dame Street, with the Lord Mayor (of the then *unreformed* Dublin Corporation) in the chair, supported by the two Sheriffs. My father, and such of us as had come with him, including my brother Daniel and myself, were at his lordship's right, and the rest of the room was crowded with the combinators, among whom it was ascertained that a number of young college boys, boiling over with the extreme Orangeism then sedulously spread among the college boys by some of the Fellows of that establishment, had mixed themselves, with the amiable object of instigating the already excited operatives to make some attack on O'Connell.

We had two hours of a most stormy scene. For near three-fourths of that time my father was not only on his legs, but had actually mounted on the table, to make himself the more conspicuous to his assailants; and there he stood, with his arms folded, and a smile upon his countenance, undergoing an almost uninterrupted storm of howlings, revilings, and execrations. From time to time he essayed to speak, and to argue calmly with them; but was seldom permitted to utter more than three or four sentences, and occasionally not so many words, ere the din of war recommenced with tenfold fury and bitterness.

Two or three small shopkeepers, well known as active partizans among the Orange party, seemed to be the chosen *spokesmen*—if such a word can be used in describing a scene where men yelled and shouted rather than spoke. All efforts, however, in this way to daunt Mr. O'Connell, or even to make him appear in the least angry, utterly failed; and then the last and potent argument was brought into play—namely, a rush at him, with the evident intention of committing some violence. The poor Lord Mayor was tumbled over in the charge; but fortunately his lordship and the

Sheriffs were enabled, as well as ourselves, to effect a retreat through a door behind the chair ; protecting our rear as we did so, by the simple and very serviceable expedient, which I strongly recommend to parties in similar jeopardy, of crossing two benches behind us, over which the leaders of the pursuing host stumbled and fell ; and so broke the rush of their followers. Some of our party had arms about them, but had the good sense to abstain from showing them, when it became apparent that the *stool-barricade* had done its business.

As we left the Royal Exchange, and walked down Dame Street, the extraordinary spectacle was presented—a spectacle extraordinary indeed in Dublin—of Daniel O'Connell hissed, hooted, and all but *pelted* by a crowd of his fellow-citizens—most of them Catholics whom he had emancipated, and for whose real interests he was still labouring and contending.

The better-conditioned, that is to say, the far larger proportion of the tradesmen, who had fallen into this temporary error, speedily saw and confessed how mistaken they had been ; and gave him their confidence again with renewed and increased

fervour. The small minority of evil-disposed, idle, and dissolute, preserved their rancour against him for the rest of his life; and were prominent amongst those whose efforts, and, unhappily, successful efforts, at sowing and spreading division among the Repeal party, and whose reckless and persevering slanders and calumnies, embittered the closing months of his life.

It was about the month of October, or of November, in the year 1842, that the "NATION" newspaper was established, and that its talented proprietor, together with several of the young gentlemen who came afterwards to be known as the "Young Ireland" party, began to identify themselves with the Association.

From hence to the end of these "Experiences" I shall have the difficult task of alluding pretty frequently to those gentlemen, and to the unhappy differences which occasioned their secession from us four years later, and the schism in the popular body. Writing at a period removed but by so short an interval from some of the chief circumstances connected with that schism, and its ever deplorable results, I am very conscious that I shall be open to much suspicion : and that my personal

feelings will be considered to enter largely into the opinions that I may express upon the matter. Yet I will not be deterred by this peril, feeling conscious that there is no wilful design on my part to exaggerate, to misrepresent, or to do injustice in any point, or in any way.

"Nothing extenuate—nor set down aught in malice."

The gentlemen of the Young Ireland party who first joined us, were, as I recollect, the late much lamented and highly talented Thomas Davis, Charles Gavan Duffy, at present, and for nine months back, a prisoner under a charge of treason-felony, for which he has already been tried, without a verdict having been come to; and for which it is understood that he is to be tried again this month; Thomas Mc'Nevin, Esq., a young barrister of much promise and ability, snatched away by death just as he was bidding fair to become distinguished in his profession; and John Dillon, Esq., also a young barrister of much ability, and with many claims to respect. Mr. Dillon is at this time, unhappily, a political refugee in the United States, having been mixed up with the insurrectionary movement of last July, greatly against his judgment, as it is understood; and

through a feeling of honourable self-devotion, which would not permit him to separate himself from his less judicious friends.

The "NATION" newspaper requires no words of mine to bear testimony to the talent and information with which its pages were extensively marked. It ranked among its contributors young men of great and varied talent, especially poetic talent; and it is not unfair to say of it that the poetic talent rather predominated; pervading even the *prose articles* in their spirit, their sentiments, their wording, and not a little too in their argumentation.

I can give this praise without suspicion to the contributors, because although I had the honour of being mentioned in the programme of the newspaper as one of its intended contributors, I never was so beyond three articles, one of the most veritable and *truly prosaic prose*; and two of *rhyme*, doubtless still more prosaic and heavy.

Thomas Davis, it is needless for me to say, was a man of no ordinary stamp. He had much genius, a fervid and at times a brilliant imagination, singular energy and earnestness, indomitable industry, and a power of retaining all that he

acquired ; and, if I may use the word, of *utilizing* at the spur of the moment, and giving practical and pungent application to his information and ideas, such as few men are found to possess.

The unhappy social circumstances of Ireland had their reflection in his character. He was a Protestant, and of a family, as has been generally understood, rather tending to *ultraism* in its political and sectarian opinions. To those who know with what unhappy sedulousness these tendencies are instilled into the minds of the Protestant youth of Ireland, and how carefully they are cultivated, it is always a matter of surprise and rejoicing when a young Protestant is found to separate himself at all from the extreme ascendency party in that country, and to show a disposition to range himself upon the side of the great mass of the people in their struggle for political ameliorations. This Davis did, and with all the more credit to himself, that it was quite evident he had a severe struggle to "screw his courage to the sticking-point," and that the struggle was by no means terminated when he took the decisive step of enrolling his name on the books of that body most obnoxious to all true-blue Orangemen,

the “Loyal National Repeal Association of Ireland.”

There was evidently a continual contest going on in his mind between an ardent and enthusiastic love of country, and an inherited and educated aversion to “Popery,” and nothing could be more creditable to him than the plain evidences deducible from his writings, that as time rolled on the native goodness and purity of his mind was enabling it to emancipate itself almost every day more and more from the trammels of early prejudice. To the last something of this remained to be done, as was shown by one or two indications of a marked, although not of a very important character: but had he been spared to the country which he loved so well, there can be little doubt that a cordiality and identification of feeling would have resulted between him and those whom the Orange papers denominated the extreme Papist party among the Repealers. At any rate it was the conviction of those who came under the latter denomination, that he was of all the “Young Ireland” party, the one most likely to be reconciled to “pull in harness” with the “Old Irelanders.”

In nothing was the mental struggle just alluded

to more visible than in his dealings with my father. Opposite feelings in this instance most evidently contended for the mastery. O'Connell had been the bugbear of his youth, as of that of most of his class and creed, until he had insensibly associated the idea of the great PAPIST AGITATOR with every thing that was forbidding and to be avoided and detested. A noble sympathy, a common love of country now brought these two men together; and it may be permitted to a son to say, that no one ever was long in intercourse with Daniel O'Connell without being won over by his genial kindness of disposition, and his warm open-heartedness. Davis was no exception to this general rule; and he early conceived, and I sincerely believe retained to the moment of his sadly premature and much lamented death, a warm admiration of the once abhorred "Daniel O'Connell," and a strong and earnest regard for him. These sentiments were undoubtedly mixed up with remnants of the old prejudices and preconceived opinions; but they were not the less warm and real.

William Smith O'Brien did not originally belong to the party of which these and other young gentlemen whose names I shall presently mention,

were the leaders: nor did he join us for nearly nine months later.

To the abilities of Mr. Gavan Duffy, his own newspaper has borne the best and most sufficient testimony. It is true that he received much assistance from the other gentlemen named, as well as from a crowd of less noted, but scarcely less talented contributors. But his own light was not obscured thereby; and it would be the rankest injustice as well as absurdity to advance any thing calculated to induce the belief for a moment that he did not personally contribute in a very eminent degree to the success of his newspaper.

In fact, while he was remarkably liberal in opening his columns to the literary attempts of others, and in encouraging them to "try again" and gallantly encounter

—“the jaundiced eye
Of the cold Critic,—keen upon a fault,
But dull as stone to merit,”

he fairly and readily entered into the lists with them; maintained a worthy rivalry with their best efforts, and not seldom bore away the palm.

For reasons obvious in themselves and obviously sufficient, I abstain from comment upon the par-

ticular part borne by Mr. Duffy in the controversies that divided and broke up the popular party during the two unhappy years from June 1846 to June 1848 ; and I do so the more readily, as well as the more properly, from the fact that he is about for the second time to be put upon his trial. And from the circumstances attending the conduct of the Irish Government towards him, especially in the flagrant instance of the tampering with the arrangement of the jury lists, he is entitled to the sympathy and not to the criticism of every lover of fair play and even-handed justice.

With regard to many among the most active of the Young Ireland party, there is a remark that may be made without fear of its being taken as aimed at individuals, however applicable to a class.

If Thomas Davis may be said to have been as it were an illustration of one phase of the unhappy social circumstances of Ireland, many of his young Catholic cooperators exhibited a reflection of yet another. Davis manifested the struggles of the spirit of nationality seeking to free itself from its old trammels, in a country where for many a year the demon of sectarianism had been constantly evoked by interests alien to the soil, in order, and

with a view to check the developments of that nationality. The section of Catholics I allude to displayed the workings of the same spirit under other difficulties, quite as sedulously fostered and encouraged for the same evil purpose, by the same anti-Irish influences,—the difficulties arising from impatience of the leading, and intolerance of the counsels of a brother Catholic.

Unconsciously to themselves they were made tools in the hands of enemies of their creed and country; whose only hope of successfully resisting the mighty moral movement of the Irish people was by sowing division among its chief promoters and guides. The genius and ability of several of the Young Irelanders only made them the more useful tools of these deep designers and abettors of mischief;—ever on the watch for an opportunity to inflict a heavy blow and a great discouragement upon the national cause.

The differences which afterwards came to such an unhappy head, showed themselves early in our Committee, after the first accession of the Young Irelanders. In the winter of 1842 we had three or four disputes and divisions; figuring forth upon a small scale, what afterwards occurred upon a

large We had more than one division in Committee on full-formed projects of the wildest impracticability: we had several discussions upon suggestions not savouring of a very profound degree of wisdom, or acquaintance with the habits, ways, and moving principles of the everyday world around us.

In one of our gravest and longest prepared *conciliabula*, it was solemnly propounded by two young men of no insignificant mark among the new accessions to our ranks, that the best way to agitate for, and advance the Repeal cause, would be *not to hold meetings—not to invite the people to connect themselves with any particular body—and not to mention the word REPEAL at all !!*

“ The name should ne'er be heard ;
Our lips should be forbid to speak
That once familiar word ! ”

Naturally enough we stared not a little at the originators of this deep policy; but they were not at all discomfited thereby; proceeding, on the contrary, to debate their plan, and support it with arguments most transcendently mystical, and most mystically profound! However, whether it was owing to mental obtuseness, or whatever the cause may have been, Daniel O'Connell remained un-

persuaded, and inclined to persevere in his unromantic, if not unphilosophic practice of speaking out plainly to the people, telling them in everyday English what would be the real remedy for their accumulated grievances, and for the distresses of their country, and exhorting them to combine and come together to labour for this great remedy.

Early in 1843—the eventful year 1843—the “Repeal discussion” took place in the Corporation of Dublin. Mr. O’Connell gave notice of it at a very early period in January ; and when he found that public attention was not sufficiently excited on the subject against the arrival of the date first named by him for opening it,—he, with *malice prepense*, adjourned the matter again, and succeeded beyond his utmost expectations, in thus causing discussion and excitement with regard to it. The able gentlemen representing the Conservative party in the Corporation did not perceive his object, and fell into the trap he had laid for them, violently complaining of the postponement, and in a manner triumphing over it as a *quasi-abandonment* of the long-talked of motion. Their simulated anxiety for the discussion was at length gratified by him upon Tuesday, February 28.

The following is the kind of descriptive introduction given in the special report of the proceedings of this and the following two days, when the great question of the legislative independence of Ireland was at last brought before them by Mr. O'Connell, under the form of a proposition for a petition to Parliament on that subject.

*Repeal Discussion in the Dublin Corporation,
Tuesday, February 28, 1843.*

“ This being the day appointed for the bringing forward of Alderman O'Connell's motion for the discussion of the great question of the REPEAL OF THE UNION, the City Assembly House, in William Street, was, from a very early hour in the morning, surrounded by hundreds of the populace, who testified by their presence, their earnest countenances, and their frequent cheers, the deep interest which they felt to ascertain what arguments could possibly be urged against the Legislative Independence of their native land.

“ It was evident, from the day the honourable and learned Alderman had put his notice of motion on the books of the corporation, that not only the

inhabitants of the city of Dublin, but the universal people of Ireland, felt that he had taken a course more likely to forward the cause of 'REPEAL,' than any other which human wisdom or foresight could have possibly suggested; and the result was looked to with an intensity of interest that it would be perfectly impossible adequately to describe.

"The great champion of his country's liberty, Daniel O'Connell, M.P., accompanied by several members of the town-council, arrived in William Street at half-past ten o'clock in the forenoon, and was received with deafening peals of acclamation by the people outside, which as soon as he entered were renewed by those who had previously filled the house. The other members of the council arrived in quick succession, and before eleven o'clock the gallery and body of the house were filled to suffocation by those who had been fortunate enough to obtain tickets of admission. The table in the centre of the Council Chamber was appropriated to the use of the gentlemen of the press, for whom every possible accommodation was made; and on no occasion since the Union were there ever known to be assembled together so many reporters of the Dublin press, or correspondents of the lead-

ing English journals, not only in London, but in some of the provinces.

“ The Lord Mayor arrived at eleven o’clock, and was received with marked applause, as well by the populace outside, as the members and strangers who filled the house.

“ Mr. Alderman Butt, the great Union advocate, arrived immediately after, and was warmly greeted by his friends and some of the members opposed to him, among whom was his great opponent O’Connell, who warmly shook hands with him.

“ After some routine business was disposed of,

“ Alderman O’Connell rose amidst great cheering, and proceeded to address the assembly. He said,—I am an Irishman; I am an ardent admirer of the fair and fruitful land of my birth—my fatherland. I am an Irishman, and I have full faith and entire confidence in the noble and exalted qualities of my countrymen the inhabitants of that land—of all my countrymen (hear, hear); all partake of the generous, hospitable, and brave spirit, so inherent in my countrymen; and if there be an exception, the number is so small, and their motives are so obvious, that they are as nothing against the immense multitudes that I believe to

be deserving of national dignity, and dishonoured by provincial degradation. (Hear, hear, and loud cheers.) I am proud of the position that I now occupy. (Loud cheers.) It is not merely as the representative of the metropolis of my native land, but standing forward as I do the advocate of Ireland and Irishmen—standing forward for the rights and liberties of Ireland—standing forward to assert that she has a right to be reckoned amongst the nations of the earth, and that the Irish people are not so degraded and disqualified as to be unfit to govern themselves. (Cheers.) Oh ! it is pleasing to reflect that everything I can possibly say with justice, that every description I can give and put prominently forward, as to the superior fertility, station, and natural qualities of my country ; the more, in fact, I can truly praise her, the more I can advance my own case in this discussion. (Hear, hear, and loud cheers.) The more I can pay a just tribute to the virtues of her inhabitants, the more are the reasons and arguments augmented and increased by which the demand I make for national regeneration should be irresistibly yielded to. (Loud cheers.) My case consists in the importance of Ireland as a

nation; my case consists in the merits and virtues of her inhabitants. (Loud cheers.) I feel, I trust, not an ungenerous pity for those who are to be to-day the advocates of the degradation and provincialism of their native land. I unfeignedly pity those who are this day to tell me that the Irish, of all the people of the earth, are unfit for self-government; or to tell me that there is something so mean, low, and despicable in the Irish character, that we are unfit to do, what every other nation on the face of the earth is fit to do—namely, to govern ourselves. (Hear.)

“ I was not here when the house met on the last day, but I saw through the medium of the newspapers that something had been said that there was an implicit understanding before your election, my Lord, that we were not to discuss political subjects during your year of office. (Hear, from Tory members.) I utterly deny it. (Cheers from the Liberal members.) There was no such understanding, and those who cheered were the first to introduce political topics here. (Hear, from the Liberal members.) Did they not introduce an address to Earl de Grey, and divide on it? (Cries of, They did.) Did they not introduce a discussion

on the wars in China and Affghanistan? Did they not begin their rambles in Ireland, and go to the borders of Pekin, to find political subjects for discussion in this room, and by this assembly? And after all this I hear a cheer from the very gentlemen who introduced political subjects here, signifying, if that cheer means anything, that political subjects were prohibited; I, however, defy contradiction, when I emphatically say there was no treaty—no compact—express or implied, to forbear the discussion of political subjects in this assembly. (*Cheers.*) *Would* I—could I enter into such a treaty?—I, who boasted in the House of Commons that the Corporations of Ireland would be Normal schools for peaceful agitation, a sentence taken up against me—when I proclaimed that one of my great objects in seeking for a Reform of the Corporations was, that Irishmen of all parties might meet together and discuss those questions deliberately, openly, and manfully. (*Hear, hear.*) Let it also be recollected that from that chair I proclaimed the same thing. (*Hear.*) I said, no person should know my politics by my judicial conduct as Lord Mayor—but still that I was a Repealer. (*Cheers.*) Implication there was none

—I would scorn to be a party to any such implication; if indeed one word had been said of any such agreement, I should have loudly and indignantly disclaimed it, as I disclaim it now. (Hear.) Why, the former Corporation petitioned upon every political subject. (Hear.) There is not one that they did not petition on. For a Repeal of the Union, they petitioned three times. (Hear.) And on another question that I took a deep interest in, they petitioned, I suppose, fifty times. (Hear.) It may be said, that it was a bad example to follow ; their bad examples I would not follow, but I would follow their good examples. (Hear.) The Parliament has taken care to restrain us within very narrow limits in our conduct as a corporate body, and we should not add further degradation to that by restraining ourselves from the expression of political sentiments. (Hear.) I say, then, what is good in the old Corporation imitate, and that is, the attention they paid to political affairs, and which was only bad so far as they directed their political exertions to party purposes. I disclaim all party purposes—I heartily condemn them as ludicrous, as well as unwise. (Hear, hear, and cheers.)

“Indeed, another thing struck me; while I was absent the hon. and learned Alderman challenged me in terms consistent with that courtesy which he never violates, to a discussion of the question of Repeal; yet now judge my astonishment when I find he who so emphatically challenged this discussion, has now given notice of an amendment to my Repeal resolution, condemning in express terms all discussion on that subject. (Laughter and cheers.)

“However, I am glad he is here to discuss the question; and now I am ready to discuss it with him, and to address the observations I have to make to this assemblage, representing as it does the city of Dublin,—a city which has suffered such master grievances by the Union, that it would be impossible, I take it, that there should not be a majority of her Representatives in favour of the petition. (Hear, hear.) It is not to convince those who are by my side, whom experience has already convinced by the irresistible evidence of their senses—of their feelings—of the destruction of their property—that I address you. No; I stand here to argue with those out of this room, who are ignorant of,

and many of whom are adverse to our rights. I, from this spot, address my arguments to the entire Irish nation—to the British people—to the civilized world — where this discussion will be carried on the wings of the press. I stand here to discuss the question in an assembly of Irish Representatives, where I cannot be cried down ; and where, however unwilling gentlemen may be to waste their time in listening to a subject on which we differ, I am sure, at least, to receive courtesy, (hear, hear,) and that attention will be paid to the arguments proving the value to Ireland of those measures which I propose. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) In another assembly I addressed before, I was foolish enough to take the line of argument, showing Ireland would be rendered prosperous by Repeal ; but I might as well have addressed the deaf adder. (Hear.) If I showed that England would be rendered prosperous by it, I would, no doubt, have had a majority ; but as surely as it followed that it would be of value to Ireland, that was a decided reason for there being a majority against me. (Hear.)

“ I will now tell the hon. and learned gentle-

man the propositions I mean to establish. I am here to assert these nine propositions :—

“First. The capability and capacity of the Irish nation for an independent Legislature.

“Secondly. The perfect right of Ireland to have a domestic Parliament.

“Thirdly. That that right was fully established by the transactions of 1782.

“Fourthly. That the most beneficial effects to Ireland resulted from her parliamentary independence.

“Fifthly. The utter incompetence of the Irish Parliament to annihilate the Irish constitution by the Union.

“Sixthly. That the Union was no contract or bargain; that it was carried by the greatest corruption and bribery, added to force, fraud and terror.

“Seventhly. That the Union produced the most disastrous results to Ireland.

“Eighthly. That the Union can be abolished by peaceable and constitutional means, without the violation of law, and without the destruction of property or life.

“Ninthly. That the most salutary results, and

none other, must arise from a Repeal of the Union.

“These are the nine propositions, which I came here to-day to demonstrate,—I say to demonstrate, not as relying on any intellectual power of mine, or any force of talent; but from the truth and plainness of the propositions themselves. (Cheers.)”

CHAPTER VII.

REPEAL DISCUSSION.—PUBLIC MEETINGS, WITH STATEMENT OF THE NUMBERS ATTENDING THEM.—STATE TRIALS.—MONSTER INDICTMENT. RUMOURS OF PERILS.—ALARM ON THE ROAD.—AMOUNT OF MILES TRAVELED.—POPULARITY OF MR. O'CONNELL.—PEACEABLE AGITATION.—THE MAIL CONTRACTS.—BUILDING OF CONCILIATION HALL.—DONNYBROOK FAIR.—THE MEETING.—FATHER DE SMET.—EXERTIONS OF MR. O'CONNELL.

THE length of the extracts from the “REPEAL” debate in the Corporation of Dublin, with which the preceding chapter has terminated, may well be excused in a record of “Agitation” Experiences, from the interest that in Ireland has attached even down to the present day to the “first move” in the great game that was played in 1843; and that would have succeeded in that year, had there not been disastrous interferences with its plan, on the part of the subordinate players at the popular side.

From the occurrence of this debate may, indeed, be dated the commencement of the great

popular movement of the year 1843. It operated like the connecting of the wires in a voltaic battery; all parts of the country seeming to receive the fiery impulse at the same moment. Indifference, apathy, and suspicion, and all that had hitherto appeared to oppose a sullen, impenetrable barrier to the advance and spread of agitation, were flung to the winds; and nearly the whole of Ireland displayed for the time an unprecedented and earnest unity of sentiment and of action. Alas! how changed are matters now.

"'Tis long to tell, and sad to trace
Each step from splendour to disgrace:—
Enough: no foreign foe could quell
Our souls;—till from *ourselves* we fell!
Yes!—*our divisions* paved the way
To villain bonds and despot-sway!"

There is much reason in rhyme sometimes; and never were there more reason and applicability than in those lines of Byron, as applied to the unhappy state of things in Ireland.

Never were hopes brighter—never more fair-seeming, than were ours during several months of that, *to us*, eventful year 1843. It is vain now to calculate what might have been, under other circumstances than those of the paltry counter-

working and under-working of some of those who loudest urged their claims to popular confidence, the result of the great movement of that year. This much may be said with confidence, that had not advantages been given to the enemy by the intrusive indiscretions—to use the mildest phrase—of parties to whom it is now worse than useless more particularly to refer, it was quite *impossible* that such a demonstration of the will of a united people, so calm, so grand, so majestic in its peacefulness even more than in its vastness and almost universality, *could* have failed of making impression on the councils of the empire, and compelling attention to the demands of the Irish nation.

But it is idle—most utterly vain and idle—to speculate on what *might* have been. The past is past; the dismal present, and the doubtful and threatening future, require all the thought that we can give to them; and we can but cast a glance behind, to renew and refresh the bitter but wholesome lessons of experience, that may save us from a repetition of disaster, if ever there shall be again a repetition of popular effort.

The following lists of the chief public meetings for "REPEAL" that were held during the course of

the year 1843, are copied from the "MONSTER INDICTMENT" and "Bill of Particulars," as exhibited at the noted "State-Trials" of the end of that and beginning of the succeeding year.

DATES.	PLACES.	NUMBERS ATTENDING.
19 March, 1843 . . .	Trim	30,000
14 May, " . . .	Mullingar	100,000
21 May, " . . .	Cork	500,000
28 May, " . . .	Longford	200,000
5 June, " . . .	Drogheda	200,000
8 June, " . . .	Kilkenny	300,000
11 June, " . . .	Mallow	400,000
29 June, " . . .	Dundalk	300,000
3 July, " . . .	Donnybrook	200,000
6 August, " . . .	Ballinglass	300,000
15 August, " . . .	Clontibret	30,000
15 August, " . . .	Tara	800,000
10 September " . . .	Loughrea	100,000
17 September " . . .	Clifden	50,000
24 September " . . .	Lismore	100,000
1 October, " . . .	Mullaghmast . . .	100,000

Total 3,710,000

19 April, 1843 . . .	Limerick.	Numbers attending not stated in Indictment, but they were all vast meetings.
4 May, " . . .	Sligo.	
18 May, " . . .	Charleville.	
23 May, " . . .	Cashel.	
15 June, " . . .	Ennis.	
18 June, " . . .	Athlone.	
22 June, " . . .	Skibbereen.	
29 June, " . . .	Galway.	
16 July, " . . .	Tullamore.	
24 July, " . . .	Tuam.	
13 August, " . . .	Maryborough.	
20 August, " . . .	Roscommon.	

There is no doubt whatever that the numbers here set down as those of the attendances at the various meetings, were very much under the reality. They were stated high enough for the purposes of the trial; but even to make a point in that trumped-up and heterogeneous proceeding, the paltry Government of the day did not consider it advisable or prudent to allow the real amount of the multitudes who attended the great demonstrations in question, to be put upon legal and official record.

And those mighty assemblages were so peaceable, so orderly! Not a blow struck—not an offensive word spoken! Every one cheerful, good-humoured, disposed to convenience each other, kind and careful to the women and little children mixed up in the crowd; and each and all burning with ardour and the most earnest enthusiasm in the cause.

It is right, however, for the sake of the credit of the prosecution, and of Sir Robert Peel's government that instituted it, to say, that there *were* two facts of awful importance established against the MONSTER MEETINGS, by the Government witnesses at the trial. It was irreversibly

proved on the most authentic and carefully prepared testimony, that at the great meeting at Longford, on the 28th of May, 1843, the people had actually and most irreverently *laughed* at a drunken Orange policeman! And again, at another of the meetings, said to have been that at Athlone, on the *eighteenth of June*, the very anniversary day of the *battle of Waterloo*, a gingerbread stall was overset by the pressure of the crowd, and its contents trampled under foot!

It may fairly be said that at least one-third should be added to the Government calculations in the foregoing lists, in order to get at something approaching the truth with regard to the actual numbers that attended the meetings in question. I was present at seven of those of which the numbers are given, viz. Trim, Drogheda, Kilkenny, Dundalk, Donnybrook, Tara, and Mullaghmast, and can certainly say, that the estimate for those meetings was much below the fact; especially as regards Trim, Tara, and Mullaghmast.

From the Trim meeting, which took place in that town, on Sunday the 19th of March, we went on to a meeting next day at Carrickmacross, in the county of Monaghan. All sorts of reports had

been in circulation for several days, indeed for weeks previous, as to the intentions of the County Monaghan and County Cavan Orangemen to attack my father's carriage on the road, either going or returning, such was said to be their indignation at his carrying his agitating campaign so near to their strongholds in the North. Friends insisted on our carrying arms with us to repel the rumoured assaults—and armed accordingly we went; but happily had not the least necessity for using them. As we approached the County Monaghan, indeed, we were in a manner dogged by a well-dressed, well-mounted, farmer-like young man, who would occasionally quicken his horse's pace so as to get alongside the carriage windows, and survey closely the inside where my father and I were seated; but after thus accompanying us for several miles, and several times repeating the same manœuvre, in perfect silence all the time, he left us; and, I think, I heard afterwards, that his motive had been simple curiosity. Had it been otherwise, there was not much to fear from his single arm, as besides pistols within our reach in each of the pockets of the carriage, poor Tom Steele, and the servant outside, were armed.

After a good meeting, a little way from the town of Carrickmacross, we had a public dinner in an extensive store in the town itself. Leaving it late at night, we had to drive a distance of two or three miles, to the house of a gentleman who resided in the neighbourhood, and who had insisted upon our whole party taking up their quarters with him. In this drive an instance occurred of the slight chances that may sometimes cause the most deplorable events. The stories that I have alluded to, as having been so industriously propagated, of the warlike intentions of the Orangemen, being rather strengthened than otherwise by some of the accounts we had received on our route, poor Tom Steele and I, as we ascended the front box of the carriage for the nocturnal drive, took care to provide ourselves with some of the arms. It so happened, that just as we got about half-way between the town and the gates of our hospitable friend, and as the carriage was rolling smoothly and noiselessly down into a deep hollow of the road, where the trees from either side completely overhung, and excluded the faint light of the stars, leaving us in nearly total darkness, we were suddenly saluted with a hoarse shout from

the pathway at the side. Then there was a rush, and by the light of the carriage lamp we could dimly discern a figure crossing in front of the horses, as if about to seize the reins and stop them. Steele's fingers and mine were simultaneously on the triggers of our respective weapons, when the man suddenly reeled away again from the middle of the road, and staggering back, fell in upon the pathway. We found that it was a drunken wretch, returning from the bonfire and other rejoicings in the town, who had thus narrowly escaped two forms of death.

It will be seen by the lists already given, that my father attended three country meetings in the month of March of the year 1843; one in April, six in May, nine in June, three in July, five in August, three in September, and one in October; making in all thirty-one. Besides these there were some minor meetings, which the journeymen getters-up of the *monster prosecution* did not think worthy of special note in the indictment. And besides all these there were the thirteen meetings of the Association, specially set down in the second list, to say nothing of the many other meetings of the same body which he attended in the course

of the nine months embraced by the indictment; and in further addition there were the meetings of the new Corporation of Dublin, then but a year in office, and much requiring and *obtaining* his presence and active participation in their affairs.

Taking all these into account, and making yet another addition still for casual meetings for charitable or other special purposes where he attended, some estimate may be formed of the amount of labour which my father underwent in the nine months in question. On all these occasions he had of course to make speeches, and people were not satisfied without a *long* speech from *him*. And as there was in almost every case of a country meeting a public dinner afterwards, he had most commonly to make two, and sometimes *three* speeches.

The amount of *travelling*, the number of miles weekly gone over, is an item not to be neglected. The following will be something like an approximation to the fact, counting the *double* and *cross* journeys:—

Trim and Carrickmacross	100 miles (statute).
Limerick	288 "
Sligo	270 "
Carried forward . . .	<u>608</u>

	Brought forward . . .	608 miles (statute)
Mullingar	. . . . .	96 "
Charleville	. . . . .	292 "
Cork	. . . . .	320 "
Cashel	. . . . .	216 "
Longford	. . . . .	146 "
Drogheda	. . . . .	56 "
Kilkenny	. . . . .	144 "
Mallow	. . . . .	294 "
Ennis	. . . . .	284 "
Athlone	. . . . .	152 "
Skibbereen	. . . . .	424 "
Dundalk	. . . . .	100 "
Galway	. . . . .	266 "
Donnybrook { (in the suburbs of the city of Dublin).		
Tullamore	. . . . .	126 "
Tuam	. . . . .	252 "
Baltinglass	. . . . .	74 "
Clontibret { (Mr. O'Connell did not attend this meeting).		
Tara	. . . . .	44 "
Maryborough	. . . . .	100 "
Roscommon	. . . . .	190 "
Loughrea	. . . . .	218 "
Clifden	. . . . .	356 "
Liamore	. . . . .	280 "
Mullaghmast	. . . . .	66 "
Total . . .		<u>5,104</u>

This total, instead of being *beyond*, is really *below* the mark, as he frequently turned from the nearest road to or from the places which he visited, either to attend chance gatherings, or for some other purpose connected with the agitation.

Clontibret was the meeting which brought the

name of the Rev. Mr. Tierney, P.P. of that parish, into the indictment at the monster trial of 1844. It is in the County Monaghan, and was attended on behalf of the Association by Mr. O'Neill Daunt. At this meeting, which was not properly one of the "monster" assemblages, the only disaster occurred that marked the whole course of the popular movement in 1843. An unfortunate man was stabbed, it is said, by one of the police, if not by one of the armed mob whom some magistrates of ultra Orange principles encouraged to go into the town, to watch the "*agitating Papists.*"

It is impossible to describe the enthusiastic nature of the excitement among the people as these meetings went on. At any moment that Mr. O'Connell had chosen during that year, and, indeed, for long afterwards, he could have raised them in insurrection, as one man, throughout the entire country; and however bloody, wasting, and desolating might have been the struggle, it is utterly impossible but that the result would have been a violent separation from England. There was a spirit abroad amongst the people, which would have made millions among them to prefer death to submission again to England; and the

whole force which the latter could by any possibility have poured into Ireland, strengthened even as it might be by arming the comparatively few of the population who were hostile to their fellow-countrymen, would have been unavailing, against an insurrection in which not only the general mass of the country would have been engaged, but in which each parish, each *hamlet*, would have stoutly borne its part.

This, however, was not my father's object, purpose, or desire. The peace-policy, which has of late times been so much sneered at and reflected upon, was with him no empty profession, no passing abstraction, but a deep conviction, and one to which he was immovably attached. Reason and religion alike made him look to it, *and to it alone*, as a means for the regeneration of Ireland. And the experience of history, especially of the history of times within his personal ken, in foreign countries as well as in Ireland, warned him from the opposite policy, as one which, unsuccessful, ever produced a worse state of things than previously existed; and, if successful, seldom eventuated in effecting any stable results of good. It is needless to add, that the almost recent occurrence that crowned his peaceful agitation in the year

1829, was potent in confirming his adherence to the principles on which that agitation had been conducted to its successful issue.

The “getting up of the *steam*” among the people was indexed in 1843, as it had been in the year preceding Catholic Emancipation, by the rapid though gradual increase of the contributions to the Repeal rent. During 1842 it had seldom risen beyond 100*l.* and rarely attained even to that amount. At the beginning of 1843, it made what was thought a great jump to 150*l.*; but from the period of the Repeal discussion in the Corporation, followed as it was, and imitated by similar discussions in nearly all the other leading municipal bodies throughout Ireland, the weekly Repeal subscriptions took almost a geometrical rate of increase; until at one period during the height of the excitement, nearly 14,000*l.* was received in one short month.

As if the Government had been of opinion that there were not sufficient causes of excitement at work, they, with singular maladroitness, contrived to *bungle* an affair of “mail-coach contracts,” in a manner that supplied for the time a fertile source of indignant oratory to the smaller fry, the tritons of the minnows of agitation in Dublin.

The matter took a ludicrous aspect from the extreme heroism of patriotic indignation assumed by the partizans of the individual particularly aggrieved, as contrasted with the manner in which both he and they had used every previous opportunity of coming before the public to cry out against *nationality*, and to chant the praises of the Union and of English management.

Still, notwithstanding the ludicrous feature thus given to it, there was a substantial grievance at bottom. The gentleman in question, the late most respectable Mr. Purcell, had had the mail-coach contract for several years, and had given every satisfaction both to the authorities and to the public; as well as rendered a great service to the poor operatives of Dublin, by giving them considerable employment in his establishment.

When the usual period came round for renewing the contract he sent in his tender as before, and found that he had one competitor, a Scotch gentleman, of the euphonious and classical name of *Croal*. The rest of the history depends on the uncontradicted and repeated statements of Mr. Purcell's friends; and not even an explanation was ever vouchsafed by the Government, or any

one upon their part. Mr. Croal was allowed to *amend* his tender; which, on being *thus* brought below that of Mr. Purcell, was accepted by the Post-office authorities; and Mr. Purcell, although his tender had been under his competitor's first offer, and although he had a right to equal notice with Mr. Croal, if only on account of the satisfaction he had given in the execution up to that time of the contracts in his hands, was informed that his tender was rejected, and a direct refusal was given to his application to be allowed the same advantage as given in the other case—namely, that of amending the terms that were considered too high.

As the means of the Repeal Association increased, and the old *Agitation-room* (the “*Great-room*,” as it was called, of the Corn Exchange buildings) became each meeting-day more and more thronged, until at length the passages outside and the staircases were crowded, and hundreds had to go away disappointed, our Committee began to conceive the idea of building a new place of meeting. With some difficulty, and not a little manœuvring, to conceal the purpose for which the ground was sought, the space now occupied by

Conciliation Hall was taken on lease from a respectable trader of very anti-repeal politics; and a Special Committee appointed to decide on the nature of the building there to be erected. It may be said in passing, that, ardent as was the patriotism of several of our young lovers of the arts on this Committee, there was a very prudent indisposition to involve themselves at all, by lease or agreement, either with the owner of the ground or the architect of the building; and but for my father's taking these responsibilities upon himself, Conciliation Hall would not have seen the light.

At first, our funds being moderate, the new building was to be but a mere shell, without height, or extent of any kind beyond what might allow between seven and eight hundred persons to attend our meetings. The old room was overcrowded with less than half that number.

As our funds rapidly increased, so did our ideas grow; and it was ordained at successive sittings of the Committee, with little interval between them, first, that the original plan of the new building should be enlarged so as to accommodate twelve hundred persons—then fifteen hundred—two thousand; and, finally, as many as the ground-

area would permit; namely, between four and five thousand persons.

Not less than the latter number were certainly in the Hall—crowded and *screwed in* one way or other—when the building was finally opened for the meetings of the Association, somewhere about the end of the month of October.

There was no attempt or pretence at architectural beauty either inside or out; if we except the not very successful Roman-cement work on the quay front. It is but justice to the builder, a most excellent, respectable and skilful individual, Mr. Peter Martin, to say, that he never professed, or assumed to be an architect; and that the quay front was meant to be merely temporary, and to give place to one of correct design in more permanent material. His own part he discharged most satisfactorily, in giving us a sound, strong, well-built, and most convenient meeting-place; decidedly the best for hearing that is in Dublin, and, I believe, in any town of the three kingdoms, and at a cost that left him very little profit indeed, after paying for the excellent materials that he supplied, and the quantity of labour to which he gave employment.

The “Donnybrook” Meeting—the only “monster” that took place in the county of Dublin, occurred on the 3d of July. The locality was the celebrated Fair-green, often told of in story and in song, especially in that most outrageous cockney attempt at Irish humour, the doggrel beginning with—

“Whoe'er has the luck to see Donnybrook Fair,
An Irishman *all in his glory* is there,
With his sprig of shillelagh and shamrock so green.”

The man must be very green indeed, greener than the shamrock itself, that would consider the Irish people represented by the *gamins* and off-scourings of a city, such as form the staple of the attendance at Donnybrook fair. As for the *sprig* of shillelagh, the expression is so redolent of Cockney-land, as in itself to condemn the song, and induce an ardent wish, that its author, and all who sing or say it, were within the reach and under the infliction of the shillelagh itself.

A very certain and irrefragable proof of the degrading effect of our provincial position, is given by the readiness with which Irishmen laugh at and applaud every ridiculous representation of Irish national character, whether in song, story,

or in print. Mr. O'Connell used to say that we are the only nation in the world that seem to enjoy, and take a kind of pride in being made subjects of mockery and buffoon ridicule. A squeamishness, or captiousness, about an occasional jest, would not indeed be creditable; but most *uncreditable* is the constant habit—constant, at least, among the more educated classes in Ireland—of chiming in with and fawning upon every scurrile jester, in England or Scotland, that chooses to launch his pointless arrow at us.

It is but justice to say, that although drawn, as the attendances at this noted fair have always been, from the very dregs of the population of a great city, the effects of Father Mathew's benevolent counsels have been very evident among them upon all the recent celebrations of the Donnybrook saturnalia; and that not only has drunkenness greatly diminished, but outrage is almost unknown.

On the occasion of the Repeal Meeting to be held on *the Green*, as it is commonly designated by the Dublin "carmen," the "trades" of Dublin mustered in great force; each under their several banners, bearing the highly painted and gilded

insignia of their respective “ crafts and mysteries.” They passed, in a sort of review, before my father’s house in Merrion Square, and some idea may be formed of their numbers, when it is mentioned that, although they marched four, and in some cases five abreast, they took two hours in passing. An enormous crowd lined two sides of the square while they were passing ; and the effect was striking of all the banners, some really very tastefully, and all very richly decorated, together with the various coloured ribands streaming from the long white wands borne by every man in the ranks. Bands of music attended them, and the chief men amongst them paraded on horseback.

The quotations I have made from my journal, naturally appear trite and jejune to others as well as to myself at this moment. But it has been well said, that if the most indifferent observer narrated, in the commonest language, the impressions of the moment, they could not fail to have, after the lapse of years, some interest attached to them when read by others. The diary of Pepys, with all its frivolities and minutiae, and perhaps by reason of these very minutiae, is a striking instance of the truth of this saying. But Pepys had the

advantage of *coming down to posterity*; whereas most modern journals and diaries are likely to be subject to the same misfortune that (to use Sir Walter Scott's notice of the disaster,) attended the Frenchman's appeal to posterity—namely, the misfortune of never reaching their address.

With regard to the Donnybrook Repeal meeting, I find set down the following :—

“ *Monday, July 10, 1843.*—Last Monday our ‘Dublin Trades’ made a magnificent demonstration at Donnybrook. They were two hours in passing in review before my father’s house, with bands and splendid banners. My father, accompanied by four or five, of whom I was one, fell into the procession after the Trades, and we proceeded to Donnybrook, through Fitzwilliam Street, Upper Leeson Street, &c. We were escorted by thousands upon thousands before, behind, at either side of the road, and in the fields, as we went along. While yet among the streets it was amusing to remark the Tory houses along the line shut up—blinds drawn down in the parlour and drawing-room windows; but their owners *peeping from the bed-rooms*. In the *Liberal* houses, every window was crowded—ladies waving hand-

kerchiefs and throwing out flowers, gentlemen cheering, &c. &c. There were green arches across the road, at three or four points, with patriotic mottoes printed on large sheets of parchment.

"The Meeting itself was a magnificent sight, and went off admirably. The trades stationed themselves in most picturesque groups about the platform. One valiant hero, in a *tin breast-plate* and helmet, with a battle-axe of the same material, stationed himself nearly in front, and rather discomposed our gravity occasionally. I did not hear what particular handicraft he belonged to, and was the representative of.

"A most impressive spectacle was the dispersion of the immense assemblage after the meeting had concluded. Each 'trade' moved off the ground in a dense but well-ordered phalanx, preceded by a band, and looking exactly like so many regiments marching from a review ground."

At the meeting were two persons to whom the scene had a peculiar interest—to one of them especially, who was little accustomed to the ways and habits of civilized man. They were the Right Rev. Doctor Hughes, Roman Catholic Bishop of New York, and the Reverend Father

De Smet, a Belgian by birth, and then, as at present, a Jesuit Missionary to the wild tribes of the Oregon territory in North America.

Both these reverend and most estimable personages had come a little out of their way, (on their return from a short visit to Europe,) to visit Daniel O'Connell; and by a chance had come in for a "MONSTER" Meeting. Dr. Hughes, an Irishman by birth, and in *heart and soul*, did not find the scene strange as did his reverend companion; for he had witnessed some of the earlier struggles for Catholic Emancipation. Still, even to him it was evidently and naturally of great interest. But to the Belgian clergyman it was altogether a novelty, of which he had not formed any previous conception; and most utterly differing from the scenes in which had hitherto lain the ordinary track of his life, and amidst which he has since been labouring, even up to the moment at which I write.

The Catholic publication, entitled the "Annals of the Propagation of the Faith," has given most interesting details of the great labours, wild and strange adventures, and extraordinary success of this devoted and admirable missionary,—a true

son of the noble Order of Ignatius of Loyola,—among the poor heathens of the far west. He seems to have acquired influence almost unbounded with them—the just and natural result of his generous and most unreserved self-devotion to their spiritual necessities; and also not a little the result of the sage and useful counsels he has given them in their necessities of a corporeal and temporal nature. The accounts of his successes—modest and unaffected in tone, as entirely unexaggerated and unimpeachable in their substance—recall vividly to mind the history of the achievements of the illustrious fathers of his order, who introduced religion and civilization into Paraguay.

Let us hope that the similarity will not reach so far as that the good fruit he has produced among the children of the wilds in Northern America, will be similarly crushed and destroyed by the violence and reckless passions of what are called civilized men!

His personal appearance is well suited to his sacred calling. There is a mild dignity blended with high intelligence, and at the same time with a most evident and beaming benevolence, in his aspect, that at once attracts, captivates, and at the

same time impresses with an involuntary, and even an admiring respect.

The almost constant travelling, and the accompanying labour and excitement of making speeches, receiving deputations, undergoing public receptions, interviews, &c. &c. at every point of his journeyings, during so many successive months, gave, in the opinion of those who had the best means of observing my father, the first serious shock to his hitherto unbroken constitution. It was hopeless, however, to dream of remonstrating with him, so bent was he upon pushing to the uttermost the great opportunity for Ireland that appeared to be given him by the awakening, as it were, of the Irish public mind in the year 1843, after a comparative inaction of nearly fourteen years—that is, from the period of carrying Emancipation. And there is no doubt at any rate of this, that his health suffered most severely from his being compelled to witness the utter loss to Ireland, and total wasting of the great opportunity of that year: partly by reason of the unworthy and most disastrous holding off from the popular cause of the bulk of the richer classes, and partly by the madness of a section of

the Repealers themselves—that same madness which, at a still more recent period, has again crossed the fortunes, and given fresh intensity to the degradation of Ireland.

But Mr. O'Connell would not admit, even to himself, that he felt any injurious consequences from his exertions, extraordinary and continuous though they were. And certainly it was very difficult for those to avoid acquiescing at least for the time in his opinion, who had opportunities of watching him during his frequent progresses. It was hard to realize to the mind the idea of danger, when looking at him during those exciting scenes and times,—joyous, high spirited and exulting, as he addressed the delighted multitudes that surrounded the platforms of the country meetings, and told them of the ancient glories of Old Ireland—of all her beauties, and the noble gifts with which she has been endowed by nature; and of the bright hopes that it was in the power of her children to make still brighter realities for her and for themselves, did they but resolve to be up and doing.

And then all remnant of gloomy forebodings that might have survived his speech was sure to be lost and dissipated in air, by the wild, ring-

ing, far-reaching cheer, that, bursting as it were from the inmost souls of his auditors, gave back at once an echo and an answer to the patriotic invocation.

Who that witnessed and shared in those high and transporting excitements, could have thought that the rashness and madness of a few was destined to blast the hopes, and render fruitless the labours and the deep and ardent devotion of the many ; and that ere the lapse of four short years, he who spoke would have died a broken-hearted wanderer in a foreign land; and they who listened and responded to his words, would be perishing by thousands under the combined agencies of pestilence and famine !

CHAPTER VIII.

MR. WILLIAM CONNOR.—ENTRÉE OF MR. JAMES GORDON BENNETT.—
“GREAT ROOM” OF THE CORN EXCHANGE.—MR. BENNETT’S EXIT.—
REV. TRESHAM GREGG.—THE COAL PORTERS.—GREAT MEETING AT
TARA HILL.—LEEDS ROLLIN.—RETURN HOME.—MR. O’CONNELL’S
EXERTIONS AND ENCOURAGEMENTS.

DURING one of the meetings of the Repeal Association in this year—sometime about the month of May—we had a scene which, if the members of that body had indeed the evil designs so liberally imputed to them by their opponents, would have afforded a great opportunity for making a demonstration of them. And unquestionably the report of it would have made a conspicuous figure in the “Monster Indictment” of the succeeding autumn; along with those of the meetings of the Association, or of country Repealers, actually noted in that formidable document.

The grievance of “insecurity of tenure,” with all its disastrous consequences to the industry and

welfare of the country, and the profits of all connected with the land in Ireland, had been a constant theme of our discussions in the Repeal Association from its beginning; and a thousand different suggestions and propositions had been brought forward from time to time, for the equitable settlement of this most difficult subject. A Committee of the Association, specially appointed for the purpose, was holding its sittings to consider and report upon these various plans; and it was their published advertisement, inviting communications from all who conceived themselves competent to shape out a measure of relief or remedy, that brought upon us the visitation I am about to allude to.

My father was absent from town upon the day in question, having to attend one of the great country meetings many miles away. We had just entered upon the ordinary routine of our business, after reading and confirming the minutes, and some short speeches had been made, and remittances handed in, when it was announced to us that Mr. William Connor, who had become known by his public letters on the landlord and tenant question, in the Repeal newspapers, was

outside, and was desirous of being admitted, in order to have an opportunity of laying before the Association, and before the country, *his* particular nostrum for a full, final, and, to all parties, satisfactory arrangement.

He was of course admitted without delay "to the honours of the sitting," as our French neighbours phrase it; and got a few cheers on entering by way of an advance on the security of his grand promised plan to take us out of the difficulty in which we were, of satisfying the impatience of the rural districts, and their appeals to us at headquarters, for the shaping out of a measure that would remove the heavy grievance of which they complained.

He commenced his speech with a proposition that no one was inclined to contest or deny. It was something as follows:—

"Mr. Chairman: I am of opinion that the simpler the remedy can be that shall be applied to the distracted state of the relations between landlord and tenant in Ireland, the better for all parties."

So far there was general agreement; and Peel himself was never more vociferously cheered in

the House of Commons for the dignified enunciation of a truism, than was Mr. William Connor on proclaiming this not very contestable axiom in the Loyal National Repeal Association.

But Mr. Connor was not a man to stop at theories and general propositions. He had a practical idea in his head, and was "short, sharp, and decisive" in unfolding it.

"For this end, Sir," continued he, "the best thing that can or ought to be done is, to recognise by law a right of ownership in his land, for each tenant or small landholder at present in possession. And until the legislature shall have passed a law for this purpose, it is my opinion that we should exhort and instruct the people of Ireland to *pay neither rent, county cess, poor rate, nor taxes!!!*"

We had quite enough of our volunteer instructor ; and got rid of him with all possible despatch ; and neither he, nor any of his plans, treatises, or pamphlets, were ever allowed afterwards to come within our doors.

A similar repulse was encountered by another worthy a few weeks earlier or later than that

administered to the great projector of "simple" remedies just mentioned.

Mr. James Gordon Bennett, of undesirable notoriety, printer and "publiciste" of New York, proprietor of the New York Herald newspaper, a fruitful repertory, according to all accounts, of calumnies, personal attacks of all kinds, and scurility of the most shameless description, had the powers of face to present himself for admission to one of the meetings of the Repeal Association at which my father personally attended.

The card of this "distinguished stranger" was handed in to Mr. O'Connell, accompanied by the information that it was that of "*an American gentleman*" desirous of witnessing the proceedings of the great popular Association of Ireland, and making the personal acquaintance of its founder and originator. Not looking with sufficient attention at the name, or in the hurry of the interruption not at once recollecting what he had heard respecting the individual who bore it, Mr. O'Connell desired him to be conducted in at once. To understand the dramatic effect of *the short* scene that followed, it is necessary to premise with a short description of the manner in which admission

to the reserved seats near the chairman, and therefore the posts of honour, was arranged.

The old "Great Room" of the Corn Exchange Buildings is an oblong quadrangle, entered by three doors, two of them at either corner of one of the smaller sides of the quadrangle; and the third a large folding door in the centre of the other and opposite smaller side. This latter door, however, which opened upon a great staircase, leading down to the corn merchants' hall on the ground-floor, was not only entirely unused by the Association, but was, in fact, barred by a *mountain* of benches, rising from the floor to within a few feet of the ceiling, and destined, of course, for the accommodation of parties attending the meetings. Of the two other doors at the other end, one (the larger of the two) was appropriated for the admission of the general crowd of the auditory; the other (a small narrow closet-like door, leading from the Committee and office rooms,) was reserved for the entry of the chief members, members of the Committee, the usual speakers, strangers, and reporters of the press.

As the Chair stood rather more than two-thirds up the room, and away from the entrance doors,

the use of this small private door would have been little, if some kind of private passage were not also managed, whereby the *privileged* could get to their seats, without having to struggle through the crowd of the general attendants at the meetings. This was accomplished by giving them admission under the tiers of side benches, which rose in a similar manner and for a similar purpose as the end benches before mentioned, from the floor to a good height on the side walls. A party entering, then, through the little door in question, advanced along the wall of the room fully two-thirds of its length without being seen at all; his way leading him, as has been described, under the side benches, the backs of which were all carefully boarded up, to prevent any of the sitters on them from dropping down into the passage below. Arrived so far, a sharp turn brought the party out into view, close by the seat of the chairman; when, if it was a stranger, or any one to whom the leaders of that body wished to show a particular mark of attention, he was invited to cross the reporter's table, (that occupied the space between the side benches, for about fifteen feet of the floor of the room, in a direct line

from the Chair,) and to seat himself near Mr. O'Connell.

Poor Gordon Bennett had “advanced thus far into the enemy's country;” had mounted the reporter's table, full in the sight of the whole meeting, and had not as yet descended from his most conspicuous position; when, unfortunately for him, a friend, who had been for some time resident in New York, and, perhaps, had personally suffered from the assaults of the Herald, whispered a few words in Mr. O'Connell's ear that at once brought to his recollection all that he had heard respecting that newspaper and its proprietor. At once the “*American gentleman's*” card was thrown back to him, and a vehement disclaimer uttered of any wish or disposition to make his acquaintance, or be graced with his presence. Mr. Bennett, confounded and dismayed, turned in his tracks, and jumping off the table, disappeared back again through the covered passage; pursued by a hearty groan from the auditory, to whom his offences had been told in a few, not very ambiguous words. Of course, he took his revenge afterwards in the columns of his newspaper, both upon the Association and upon its leader; and of course, also, his

having done so gave neither Mr. O'Connell, nor any one of the members of the Association, the slightest possible concern.

It is but fair towards the Americans to say, that Gordon Bennett is by no means an indigenous product of their soil, but an importation from Scotland. They would, however, have more right to such an explanation if they did not give the encouragement, which all writers, even their own Cooper, declare to be given in their cities to such men, whether natives or foreigners.

The Repeal Association not only rejected individuals whose conduct appeared to merit public reprobation, but it also repudiated and rejected all assistance in its efforts on the part of bodies of men, who were known to be adverse, or to have done anything contrary to the great principles of the liberty of mankind in any part of the world. Thus, at a time, and at more than one time, when the finances of the body were at a low ebb, and money was wanting to sustain the operation of its machinery, or give protection to poor men in various parts of Ireland, suffering under the many and grievous forms of landlord and magisterial oppression, sums of money,

amounting to hundreds of pounds, have been promptly and decisively rejected, and returned by the first post to their donors in New Orleans and other slave-holding cities of America, for the sole, but amply sufficient reason, that these contributions came tainted with the plague-spot of the advocacy and sustainment of the accursed system of negro-slavery.

In this, however, the Repeal Association only imitated and repeated the conduct of the Catholic Association, upon the occurrence of similar occasions during the existence of the latter body.

The mention of the entrance of strangers and visitors into the place of meeting of the Repeal Association, brings to mind two doughty achievements of the *locally-famed* Reverend Tresham Gregg; whilome chaplain and father-confessor to the "Orange," or "Brunswick," or "Conservative-Registry and Protestant Operative Association," of the city of Dublin.

Never physical-force Chartist laboured more zealously and inveterately to disturb and nullify the proceedings of meetings in England for rational and peaceful Reform, than did this reverend individual exert himself on all possible occasions, to

create, or *attempt* to create disturbances at the popular gatherings in Dublin. In general, however, his efforts had the same fate as those of the unhappy youth in classic story, in being made—

“ *Nec Diis, nec viribus aequis;*”

and ending in his total discomfiture and prostration.

In 1837 or 1838, his myrmidons, reinforced by a band of 300 Spartan-*Orangemen* from Wicklow and Dublin counties, attempted to meddle with a meeting at the Coburg Gardens in Dublin, where a petition was being moved against Lord Stanley’s pet project of those times—his measure for disfranchising the constituencies of Ireland. The result of the attempt might be summed up as briefly as Caesar’s world-famous bulletin; but with a slight change of person, number and mood in the verbs:—

“ *VENIRUNT—VISI SUNT—VICTI SUNT!*”
“ They came—they were seen—they were conquered !”

The head of the column of “ *Protestant Ascendency-boys*” was no sooner descried, than the coal-porters of Dublin, a formidable and furiously patriotic race, who with many assistants had

actually “camped out” the preceding night to *watch the platform*, broke up the rails of the latter, having been deprived by some lover of peace of all other weapons, and arming themselves with the fragments, rushed upon the Orange phalanx, (nearly every man of which had a pistol, or a dagger, or *both*, along with a good stick,) and knocked down or put to utter rout the luckless invaders—whose chiefs were said to have set a most prudent example, by running away the first.

On one occasion, when Mr. O’Connell was absent from Dublin, and the proceedings of the Association were not expected to be of much interest, the Reverend Tresham Gregg, with a chosen legion, suddenly appeared at the door of the Corn Exchange, and forcing admission, rushed up-stairs, and took possession of the “Great Room,” compelling the few that had yet assembled there to consult their safety by flight. Three sound and hearty *Protestant* cheers were given when this feat was accomplished, and the Reverend Leader installed into the Chair. Resolutions, it is said, were then formally proposed and passed, denouncing Popery, Repeal, Daniel O’Connell, and all their aiders and abettors; and

the *Popish* and “Repeal” echoes of the walls
were astonished by being called into requisition
to syllable the Shibboleths of Orangeism and
“Protestant Ascendency!”

“And all went merry as a marriage bell—
When, hush ! hark ! — a deep sound strikes, like a rising
knell !
Did they not hear it ?—no, ‘twas but the wind,
Or the car, rattling o’er the stony street.
On with the *speech*—let *s spite* be unconfin’d,
No stay, nor stop, when Orange spouters meet
In Popish agitators’ wonted seat :—
When, hush ! hark ! that deep sound strikes in once more !
And, nearer, clearer, deadlier than before !
Run ! run !! “*It is—it is* the coal-porters’ dread roar !”

And so, in truth, and in an unlucky hour for
the poor invaders, it was ! Tresham Gregg and
his comrades had, unfortunately for themselves,
entirely forgot that the Corn Exchange Rooms
were on the Coal-quay, and exactly at that part
of it where the coal-porters—always, as I have
said, very determined patriots—“most did con-
gregate.” The entry of the Orangemen had not
been noticed ; but a fugitive Repealer from the
rooms up-stairs, having brought down the intel-
ligence of Gregg’s onslaught and its temporary
success, the *war-cry* spread ;—drays, coals, and all

were abandoned in an instant, and the BLACK DIAMONDS rushed up to the rescue of the invaded and polluted head-quarters of Agitation.

But for the undeserved compassion of some of the clerks of the Association, who opened the small door before mentioned to the retreat of the Orangemen, they might have had sore cause to rue that day; and as it was, many of them bore away not very honourable marks of their adventure.

The "Coal-porters" of Dublin have other claims to remembrance for their services to the popular cause. Mr. O'Connell used always to say, that but for them he "*could not have carried Catholic Emancipation.*"

The fact was, that during a part of the earlier progress of the old Catholic Association, a number of students of Trinity College (the University of Dublin), aided by some of their brother Orangeists, the low, drunken, and dissolute portion of the "freemen" of Dublin, had several times invaded the popular meetings, and although outnumbered and *ousted* on each occasion that they had thus adventured, had succeeded so far as to disturb considerably the proceedings, and deter quiet men and ladies from attending.

While yet exposed to this annoyance, and not quite seeing how he could altogether prevent it, mischievous and embarrassing as its consequences were, Mr. O'Connell had taken the "Corn Exchange" premises for the infant Association ; and that body had moved in and taken possession. To his astonishment he all at once found the meetings undisturbed, not the slightest attempt being renewed to interfere with them ; and he speedily learned that this was owing to a wholesome and a well grounded fear of a *thrashing* from the honest coal-porters, whose protection he had quite unwittingly secured, by coming into their peculiar territory.

He often said that the Catholic Association should have had to give up its meetings if those disturbances continued ; and that nothing stopped the latter, or could have stopped them, but the stout guardianship of "*the boys of the Coal Quay.*"

Tresham Gregg made a final attempt when Conciliation Hall was first opened in October 1843 : but did not succeed on that occasion in saying twenty sentences, when he had to be rescued, *vi et armis*, by poor Tom Steele and others,

from the tender hands of his old antagonists, who were shrewdly inclined to dip him in the river, or at least to give him an exemplary *dusting* with the coal-sacks.

The great occurrence of this year (1843), and the culminating point of the “monster meeting” agitation, was the assemblage at Tara Hill, upon Tuesday, the 15th of August.

To that meeting, which was announced and advertised for several weeks previously, enormous multitudes of people from all the counties within two days' march and even upwards of the scene of action, resolved to go, and carried their determination into effect;—from Dublin county, Kildare, West Meath, Wicklow, Louth, and all parts of the county Meath itself, it was not very wonderful that, in those times of excitement and enthusiasm, there should have been large “contingents” to swell the attendance at this great meeting. But the counties of Longford, Cavan, Wexford, Kilkenny, King's and Queen's, Monaghan, and even Fermanagh, and Down, in the north; and Tipperary and distant Clare, in the south, added to the numbers who then came together. For days and nights before the 15th of August, people

were on the move, bearing with them provisions for the time of their absence from home, and trusting to the fineness of the weather to enable them to dispense with lodging-houses, and sleep out—

“ With nothing but the sky for a great coat.”

The 15th of August is a holiday of strict and peculiar observance in the Catholic Church, being one of the great festivals of the blessed Virgin; and the injunction to hear mass is as strictly enjoined and obeyed as it is upon a Sunday. To convenience the myriads that were on the ground at Tara Hill on that morning, a number of clergymen volunteered, with the permission of the good Bishop of the Diocese, the Right Rev. Doctor Cantwell, to say their masses in the open air, at temporary altars constructed upon the sides and summit of the hill. At the least thirty or forty masses were thus celebrated during the morning, and each had a congregation of many thousands.

It is described as having been a most strikingly impressive sight. Within the compass of vision five or six masses could be seen proceeding at the same time, but at some hundreds of yards apart, each with a vast multitude radiating around it,

bare-headed, on their knees, deeply attentive and apparently absorbed in their devotions. Not a sound was to be heard throughout that densely peopled space, save the low murmur of the voices of the officiating priests, or the tinkling of the tiny mass-bells at the appointed periods of the service. These borne upon the gentle breathings of the summer-breeze were all that met the ear; while to the eye, universal nature seemed stilled and fixed in profoundest reverence and adoration of its God. The glorious August sun shone down in cloudless brilliancy upon the whole, and it scarce seemed an idle and vain presumption to fancy that its splendour typified the blessing of Almighty Providence descending on the sinless struggle of a nation to recover their long lost liberties and rights.

A scene equally impressive, and partaking also of a religious character, succeeded to the regular service of the day. Tara Hill, it is well known, was the scene of a sanguinary defeat of the insurgents in the disastrous year 1798, by the royal army, consisting of regular troops and yeomanry. The unfortunate herd of undisciplined and nearly unarmed peasants had been foolishly persuaded to

make a stand against fully armed, well equipped, and (in comparison to them) *disciplined* troops; with scarcely a single advantage of position beyond the mere fact of being on a hill, instead of down in the plain. Tara Hill is in no way difficult of ascent by nature, and the only artificial difficulties consisted of a few ditches and low hedges, with the walls of a ruined church of no great extent. The consequence was, that after some sharp fighting for a short time, the insurgents were completely driven from their position with terrible loss, and almost annihilated in their retreat.

The bodies of the soldiers, yeomanry, and militia-men who had fallen in the brief but bloody encounter among the inclosures, were given decent and christian burial in the grave-yard of the old church before-mentioned; but the remains of the unhappy insurgents were not deemed worthy of similar treatment. A vast trench was opened on the bleak exposed brow of the hill, and into it were cast the mangled and gory corpses; collected not only from the scene of the last desperate stand, but from everywhere along the line of flight. The earth was then shovelled hastily in upon them, leaving a huge ridge, long,

irregular, and unsightly, even to ghastliness, to mark where had been gathered in that terrible harvest of death. The grass of many summers had long ago covered over and hidden all the unsightliness, and the green ridge, with its luxuriant herbage waving in the passing breeze, was pleasant and inviting to the eye of the chance visitor, who might not know the fearful material with which it had been mainly raised.

Hitherwards a species of pilgrimage was made, as if by common consent, of the vast crowds upon the hill, after they had heard mass; and they knelt in thousands by and near this wild grave, offering up various prayers of the Catholic Church for the eternal repose of the souls of the multitude whose bones were mouldering beneath them. The most indifferent or hostile observer—the man most dissenting from these poor people in their sentiments, opinions, and tendencies, political and religious—could not fail to have been deeply struck and impressed with the real sublimity of this scene; and it must ever be preserved in the liveliest and most solemn remembrance by those witnesses who were identified with the people in feelings and convictions.

A trifling but singular circumstance connected with the locality, and the scene itself, attracted considerable attention and curiosity at the time; and was *almost* made a matter of accusation in the State prosecutions of the end of the year, against the "Agitators," who were the objects of those prosecutions.

A small species of wild geranium, bearing a flower closely resembling in shape a *pike head*, with its usual ferocious adornments of an axe blade at one side of the shoulder of the weapon, and a crook at the other, (intended for cutting the reins of cavalry,) is found in some abundance growing on and near the "*Croppies' Grave*,"—that is, the ridge before-mentioned, where were buried the slaughtered rebels, or "*Croppies*," as they were designated in 1798, in allusion to the then *revolutionary* symbol of wearing the hair cut short behind, and without powder. A further singularity and point of *rapprochement* is, that this little flower is streaked with crimson, just as its formidable likeliness might be supposed to appear after hard service in close engagement. The story goes, that nowhere else in the vicinity are any specimens to be met with beyond the limits of the

“*Croppies’ Grave* ;” and however the fact may be, the popular belief being quite decided in that respect, the people took especial and particular notice of this *lusus naturæ*, and gathered it in quantities to preserve as a memorial of the place and the occasion.

As before said, this circumstance wanted very little of being made a *capital item* of charge against us, at a later period of the year; and was actually made a subject of some comment by the Attorney-General, when unfolding and detailing his “monster indictment.”

Early in the morning, Mr. O’Connell, &c. having heard mass, we repaired to a public breakfast given to the Repealers by one of the staunchest and most ardent of our party, among the truly respectable and valuable middle classes of Dublin, Mr. McGarry, of Baggot Street. From thence, after a thorough “*agitation breakfast*,” and a fearful demolition of the good things provided for us, we started for Tara Hill. The day was fine, the streets and roads were crowded, the people seemed everywhere exulting and enthusiastic; and in short, there was every thing to excite and to exhilarate around us, and meet us at every yard of the way.

For some hours the "pace" was good, and we got along in great style. But we were yet miles from the hill, though full in view, when the thickening crowds, and the already evident symptoms of a regular *encampment*, reduced us first to a broken jog-trot, and finally to a walk. I do not at the moment remember the exact line of our approach, but it was by a very circuitous and winding route; at both sides of which there were, during the last two or three miles, all kinds of vehicles which had discharged their occupants, or cargo, ranged along; the carts and jaunting-cars tilted up with their shafts in the air, the carriages with the poles unshipped, and stowed away, and the horses piqueted after a rude fashion in the fields behind. Meantime those who had occupied or brought them, had gone forward to the hill, leaving in some cases a boy to watch their property, but in many cases, *no one at all*: nor was there an instance known, in which plunder had occurred in consequence.

The same scene, we were informed, was to be witnessed along all the other lines of the approach, the only variations being where—under the bodies of the carts, and within rude tents, constructed of

some old sheets and blankets—parties who **dreaded** to encounter the crush on the hill, and whose ambition was satisfied by being able to say that they *had* gone to the Tara meeting, were **snugly** ensconced, exchanging their comments on the cavalcade going by them; and occasionally engaging in sharp encounters of small wit and mutual gibings, with the less prudent or more daring among the passing throng.

From the moment that we reached the foot of the hill, and commenced its ascent, our horses had an easy time of it. The carriage, a heavy travelling vehicle, well laden inside, with box-seats fore and aft outside also filled, and one or two particularly obliging friends on the roof, was literally and absolutely *borne up* the hill by the vast human wave surging upward to its crest. Such a scene as the hill itself presented has seldom been witnessed. The whole of its surface, and a very wide circle around its base, were *black* with dense masses of human beings; and long winding lines of black, radiating away to all points of the compass, marked where yet were pouring along or were encamped additional multitudes of people.

The vast human swarms at every point of the

elevation displayed in relief against the sky, or in stronger and more striking relief against their own dark masses, banners and insignia of all kinds ; and the uniformity was further broken by occasional *mounds*, as it were, of clustering human beings raised above the general level by scaffolding, or the grouping here and there of several vehicles close together, so as to form a species of rude hustings.

The monster mound of all was right in the centre of the topmost level of the hill. There was erected the platform for the chairman, secretary, speakers, and reporters ; and a perfect forest of flags, streamers, bunches of gay ribands at the heads of white wands, borne by the chief managers of the meeting, waved over head ; while patriotic mottos of all kinds, in English and in Irish, were displayed on the bulwark that protected the whole length of the front.

It was said, but I believe without truth, that Ledru Rollin, who, within the last fourteen months, has been playing so strange a part in French politics, was present on this occasion. If he were so, it certainly was entirely without the knowledge of Mr. O'Connell, or those who were gene-

rally about him. Some of the evidence given at the “State Trials,” a few months later, would have inclined the general belief to accept the fact, had it not come from a suspicious quarter; namely, an official, long known for his Orange principles and tendency to ultra-zeal. To do him justice, he did not positively declare it; but such was the effect of his testimony; and according to him the people, at least in the outskirts of the crowd, were full of the idea of seeing the “illustrious stranger,” and manifested their feelings by repeated cheers for “*Leathery Rolling!*”—that being *their* version of the name in which rejoices the great Brutus *manqué* of Republican France.

A couple of months previously, Ledru Rollin had made a tender of his sympathies and those of the “*extrême gauche*” (or, as the French joke then had it, “*extrêmement gauche*”) party in France, to the Repealers of Ireland. The offer was heralded and announced with a great flourish of trumpets in the newspapers of that party in Paris, particularly in their chief organ, *Le National*; and a letter was written by Ledru Rollin to Mr. O’Connell on the subject.

The latter courteously but utterly and abso-

lutely declined the offer; and willingly accepted all the attacks of the *then* party of the "*National*," rather than have the semblance of looking for, or desiring foreign alliance in a constitutional struggle.

With the speeches, &c. at the meeting this record has nothing to do, and so any person curious on that subject must refer himself to the columns of the Irish newspapers of the time. It was, of course, impossible that any but a very small portion of that enormous assemblage could have been at all cognizant of the matter of the speeches delivered at the main hustings. But that portion was very small only as compared with the whole number congregated on and about the hill; and would have formed a very respectable-sized meeting in itself: and the deepest and the stillest attention was manifested to the proceedings by all within the radius of the speakers' voices. And even beyond that radius there were many circles, the individuals composing which contented themselves with receiving at second-hand from their more fortunate neighbours the sentiment, whatever it might be, that had just called forth the bursts of cheering, in which they themselves had

actually taken part on trust, and in anticipation of its proving a rightful appeal to their sympathies and feelings.

The only interruptions were when some gaily-attired "*temperance-band*," placed out of earshot of the proceedings on the platform, unluckily took it into their heads to while away the time by dis-couraging most eloquent music of their own; an occurrence that ensured to them a volley of indig-nant execrations and adjurations, quite sufficient, one would have thought, to scare away the Muse for ever, and nip their genius in the bud.

Some of the minor and more distant platforms, or hustings, which were quite beyond the reach even of telegraphic communication of what was going on at the principal stand, became as it were the suns of other systems, and had each their own little blaze of oratory, and their own particular concentrations. And beyond these, again, in the outermost verge of the assembly, the older and graver met and talked and nodded their heads together, and exchanged their congratulations on the "*great day for Ireland* that was *in it*, glory be to Heaven!" while the younger and lighter-spirited made a ring around some travelling bagpiper

or fiddler, and danced away heartily and merrily ; with every now and then a blithesome spring into the air, and a ringing whoop for "*Ould Ireland and the Repale.*"

A public dinner followed, which was held in a large enclosure near Tara hall, the handsome mansion of Mr. Lynch, a gentleman of fortune and family in the neighbourhood. The enclosure was for the greater part tented over with canvass, but the night was so serene, and the weather so beautiful, that the dinner might well have taken place *sub-lunâ*. An enormous number of persons contrived to be present, every inch, not only of sitting but of standing-room, being most fully occupied, and the walls of the enclosure bearing their burthen also. The usual patriotic toasts and speeches, and more than usual excitement and enthusiasm, marked the proceedings, which did not terminate until nearly an hour after midnight.

Being anxious to get home, I availed myself of the offer of a seat in the vehicle in which the reporters were starting for Dublin, with their treasures of eloquence for the morning papers. We had a drive of four or five hours, under a most brilliant moon ; and along a road, both path-

ways of which were strewed with human forms, prostrate and inanimate as if dead. An army, after a severe and harassing march under an enemy's fire, could not have left greater appearances of desolation and destruction along its track. The poor fellows—men and boys, on their return from Tara to their homes in Dublin and its vicinity, had sunk down, one on top of the other in frequent groups along the pathways; and here and there broken carts or other vehicles, with the horses loosed from the harness, and stretched and sleeping like their masters, increased the resemblance I have spoken of. The clear cold moon shone down brightly upon all, chastening the more vulgar features of the scene, and rendering it singularly impressive.

The thought has more than once occurred, that this was the crowning day of my father's life. He had had a substantial triumph before, in the success of his weary and protracted labours for Catholic Emancipation; and a minor triumph in the striking off subsequently of one of the few remaining links of Catholic servitude, by the accomplishment of Municipal Reform. He had won distinction at his profession, and his enemies had been compelled to mark their acknowledgment of

it, and to confess, and endeavour to repair, the injustice of the exclusions they had practised against him. He had had many and abundant proofs from numerous parts of Ireland of the love and affection of his fellow-countrymen; and the title of "LIBERATOR" had been conferred upon him apparently with their general assent. But the triumphs and honours of the year 1843 had come thronging so thickly and rapidly upon each other, and accompanied by such circumstances of high and enthusiastic excitement, and deep and at times really sublime impressiveness, that all former events seemed little in comparison, and all former results likely to be outshone, surpassed, and crowned by the great and final achievement towards which the popular movement under his guidance appeared to be assuredly advancing.

The previous meetings, succeeding one another at intervals of but a few days during the course of four months, had gone on increasing in numbers in almost a geometrical ratio; but on the hill of Tara an assemblage had now come together, far exceeding any of them, and almost equalling the entire aggregate of their respective numbers.

And the peace, good order, good humour, unity

of purpose, high intelligence of the end sought and entire devotion to the working of it out, that had marked the demeanour of the people before, manifested themselves upon this occasion in redoubled quantity and intensity, as if to keep in suitable proportion to the mere numerical increase.

Tara, then,—with its million of human beings congregated peaceably, and without any of the weapons of physical strife,—to declare for, and demand the restoration and full enjoyment of the inalienable rights of the citizens of a free land, may be considered to have been, as it were, the summing-up and climax of the mighty national movement of 1843, and at the same time the most sublime spectacle, because by far the largest demonstration of the will of a people using only the force of argument and of opinion in the pursuit of their ends, that ever the world has witnessed.

To be the leader and chief in such a scene—the observed of all observers—the one upon the accents of whose lips tens and hundreds of thousands hung with implicit confidence, and confiding and admiring affection—to be thus, as it were, solemnly installed by a nation in the high position of its

fully accepted and entirely trusted representative,—this was an honour and surpassing distinction, such as well might warrant exultation in the heart of its object, and make him feel repaid for many and many a long year of labour and sacrifice long apparently thankless, and of coldness, taunt, calumny, treachery, and disappointment.

But Daniel O'Connell, though he would have been more than man if he had not felt this exultation, allowed it no farther influence on his mind than served to brace anew and strengthen his resolve to struggle onward to the last in the cause of the people that thus trusted him and honoured him, and of the country that he so fondly and devotedly loved.

That day the star of his earthly destinies touched its meridian—that day his fortunes culminated, and the labours of his life met their highest earthly reward. And even from that very day commenced the decline, slow and imperceptible at first, but soon to be sadly manifest in its accelerated and still accelerating progress, till the end was reached, of his hopes and those of unhappy Ireland.

Rashness, jealousy, and treachery were at work

even then and there. At the outskirts of the meeting, and even upon the very hustings, where sat Mr. O'Connell himself, these agencies were busy; and feeble as their efforts then were, and almost imperceptible in their results, yet the intestine war, in aid of the two great objects of English policy, division and domination, was then begun, and thenceforward steadily progressed until our ruin was accomplished.

CHAPTER IX.

ENGLAND'S PRIDE OF DOMINATION.—CAMPAIGN AGAINST REPEAL.—
EARL OF BODEN.—SIR JAMES GRAHAM.—MEETING AT ATHLONE.—
MEETING IN DUNDALK.—MR. O'CONNELL'S SPEECH.—VENEDY.

WHILE these monster meetings were going on in Ireland, there was much kindling of wrath, and direful explosions of it at times in either House of Parliament.

The besetting sin of England and of Englishmen is pride.

“ By that sin fell the angels. How can man, then,
Though the image of his Maker, hope to win by it ? ”

England *has* won by it as yet. Self-confidence and a high opinion of one's self is not a more useful quality for an ambitious individual than it is for an ambitious nation; and not a few of the successes of England are attributable to the high

daring inspired by the quality in question. Some time or other, however, the old condemnation against pride will be vindicated, and carried out in her case, as history, sacred and profane, records it to have been in many a similar case throughout the long reach of ages.

Her pride of domination—the worst and most inveterate form of her besetting sin—was alarmed at the Irish movement; and when that occurs in England there is an end of reason, of argument, of all idea of justice, mercy, or any consideration whatever. What is called the natural fairness of Englishmen, at least of Englishmen in the aggregate, practically amounts to this, that provided you are *down*, and *very* down—utterly helpless and submissive—they may good-humouredly let you alone, or even extend assistance with a kind of contemptuous good nature. But offend in any way against John Bull's darling self-consequence and self-adulation, and he will crush you if he can!

In 1843 the monster meetings sorely troubled his digestion. It seemed as if Ireland—the vassal Ireland!—tired of waiting for the fulfilment of illusory promises, had resolved on trying to assist herself, without reference to what might be the

good will and pleasure of her powerful and not very scrupulous neighbour. It was of no consequence what might be the extent of the real grievances of which she complained—no matter what justice and right might ordain as to them—the sole and grand object of attention and effort was to stop her, and to punish her for daring to manifest the least disposition towards thinking and acting for herself!

The campaign against the Repealers began with flying notices of motion and “questions” to ministers in the Commons, during the very appropriate month of April. One notice on the subject was abandoned for the very sapient reason that its originator himself assigned in the House—viz. that he “could not get Mr. O’Connell to come over and meet it!”

On the 9th of May, however, something more important than these *avant-coureurs* was essayed as a demonstration against Repeal. The heavy artillery were brought up and got into position; and the Earl of Roden, the great gun of the Irish Orangemen, opened fire in the House of Lords. Of his speech it is needless to say anything. It was what from an Irish Orangeman of the present

times might be expected—an abnegation of pride of country—a willing acceptation of provincialism, provided only that so much of the old “Orange ascendancy” in Ireland as had been left untouched by the Catholic Relief Act of 1829 should be favoured and still upheld.

The Irish Orangemen in 1780, 1782, and 1800, acted very differently indeed, and spoke in quite another fashion. I have before me at this moment the resolutions of upwards of thirty Orange lodges in various parts of the kingdom against the plan, and *any* plan, of a Legislative Union, and declaring, “*as Orangemen and Irishmen,*” their utter abhorrence of such a measure, and devotion to the legislative independence of their native land. If the rumour, now (*August 1849*) gaining strength, of the destruction of the potato prove to be true, a climax of ruin may speedily be attained in Ireland, when the descendants of those who spoke and wrote so honourably and manfully will have the conviction forced upon them, by their own urgent perils, that there is but one chance, one hope, for the unhappy country in which their lot is cast, and that is, in the return of her rich absentees, and their taking counsel with the

people on the common danger, in their restored native Parliament.

The interest of England, too, will be found imperatively to demand this blessed change. Otherwise, she will be as linked with a carcass exhausted of all its vitality, and tainting to the heart the vitality of the empire itself.

Strange to say, the parliamentary thunders affrighted not the souls of the audacious Repealers. Notwithstanding the announcement of the ministers, that they would prefer inflicting on Ireland all the horrors of civil war, in preference to conceding to us our constitutional and inalienable right of managing our own affairs—notwithstanding the philippics of poor Lord Brougham, seeking service, and ready to do any dirty work for it—notwithstanding even the *powerful* and *commanding* eloquence, adorned and rendered more impressive by classic purity of taste, of Lord Beaumont—still the Repealers persisted, and still Repeal went ahead.

“ *Per damna, per cædes, ab ipso,
Duxit opes, animumque bello.*”

It was possibly in the momentary ebullition of disappointment at this, that Sir James Graham,

then Secretary for the Home Department, uttered his famous declaration against Ireland—a declaration which, with its withdrawal, has been noticed before.

In that notice there was the hope expressed that the then coming—now the *past*—session, would see opportunities taken by him and Sir Robert Peel to give practical effect to their new-born favourable dispositions towards Ireland, as announced by them in 1845 and 1846. Sir Robert Peel has in this session shadowed out a policy of larger and broader dimensions than hitherto propounded; and far as it might fall short of what the Irish people believe to be the only real—the only entire and permanent remedy of our thousand ills, yet there cannot be a doubt that had it been adopted, and were it now coming into operation, enormous and immediate relief would have been given to a sinking country; and the fearful winter that is before us, if the report of the potato failure prove correct, would be robbed of half its terrors. But it has not been adopted, and now—

“ The tempest-clouds close o'er us—which, when rent,
The earth will be strew'd thick with other earth,
Which her own clay will cover—heap'd and pent;
Peasant and lord—friend, foe—in one vast ruin blent ! ”

Sir James Graham would have given Sir Robert Peel the aid of his singular business habits, clear-headedness and efficiency, in carrying out this really "*large and comprehensive*" scheme, and thereby done much to ensure its success. So far surmise may go as respects him; notwithstanding that there dwells in our minds rather unpleasantly the memory of certain words of his this session that would argue a cruel churlishness as to temporary relief to the starving hordes of the west of Ireland. In other respects he has maintained a dignified position this session, and displayed less of his old faults; especially of that caustic levity and proneness to indulge in a tartness often quite gratuitous, and always exceedingly offensive, to which he formerly gave over much indulgence.

It is in no spirit of fulsomeness, and in no forgetfulness of the unworthy past, that I make these allusions to the two leading men of the old opposition. Neither is it in any very defined hopefulness. Too many blank and bitter disappointments have resulted from placing faith in projects and declarations and manifestations of intentions, proceeding from men out of office.

Too well have we seen that the iron yoke of the prejudiced and unreasoning public opinion of the potential middle classes of England—prejudiced and unreasoning with regard to Irish affairs—will make any set or denomination of ministers to wince like “galled jades,” when once the harness of office is upon them. But it is in the *nature*, that is to say, in the feebleness, of man to be ever seeking to exchange the contemplation of the actual, real and instant, for the more pleasing pictures that imagination draws of the possible and the contingent.

The present ministers, or the powers that bear upon and influence them, are afflicted with political economy *run mad*, and most unjust in its madness, as well as unwise and ungenerous. We are neither to be allowed to help ourselves, by the means of our restored parliament, and the circulation at home of our absentee capital, nor are we to receive any efficient assistance from the country that has usurped the control and management of our affairs. “*Laissez faire*” and “*laissez passer*,” the old dicta of Colbert’s time, have been applied to our unhappy case; and as they so have been, we may be permitted to supply the free translation, viz.—

“*Laissez faire*,”—let the visitation of Providence have its full effect, unmitigated and uninterfered with; “*Laissez passer*,”—let the Irish people pass away, and give place to an English and Scotch immigration.

Being upon the chapter of “*Monster Meetings*,” it may not be uninteresting to review some passages in an account of them by a foreigner, who was an eyewitness.

“*Athlone Meeting, June 1843.*— . . . Those on the platform were mainly of the middle classes from the towns. Every third man at least was a priest. About 100 yards off was a second platform, raised for the ladies. By degrees the multitude on foot collected round our platform, and soon formed a body so firm and compact, that they all seemed to have sprung from the earth in one mass. The majority nearest to us were stout full grown men and young lads. Further off there was a circle of men on horseback, whose number, like those on foot, was continually increasing. Behind them lay on the ground, stood, or walked about, the women, and the less strong or the less curious. There were from forty to fifty thousand persons gathered together before that

which may be properly termed ‘the meeting’ commenced. It was a wondrous sight to behold this mass of living beings, waiting thus patiently for the things to come, or rather for **The Coming Man**. There was something, too, very peculiar in this sight, and the manner, order, or regulation in which it involuntarily presented itself.

“The men wore a sort of uniform ; for grey coats are the prevailing fashion as to dress in Ireland. Women, on the contrary, prefer scarlet; and on the present occasion their dress constituted a striking contrast to that in the foreground of the picture. A good hour passed before Mr. O’Connell, and the conductors of the festival, with the bands of the teetotallers, arrived, and during all that time the greatest peace and order prevailed. There was much greater stillness than I could have thought it possible.

“At last there was a movement in the rear of the assembly, and all poured towards one common centre. Now there rose a cry such as never before had greeted my ears. Now all hats are raised in the air, and there burst forth the unanimous shouts, ‘Hurrah ! hurrah ! hurrah ! . Long live O’Connell ! Long live the Liberator !’ A hundred thousand

voices sent forth these salutations to the man whose necromantic power had circled them around him. He sat on the box-seat of a carriage, drawn by four horses, and he answered the salutation with head, and hand, and cap. How he made his way from the carriage to the tribune, I do not to this day even comprehend; for there was not room for a person to fall, much less to walk. ‘Make way for the Liberator,’ was the charm word which accomplished that wonder that otherwise had been an impossibility. Arrived upon the tribune, a seat was brought for him, on which he sat down, whilst Tom Steele, with one or two more of his friends, held a standard over his head, which served as a shade to protect him from the rays of the sun.

* * * * *

“Our conversation was interrupted by the breaking down of one of the steps of the platform. All stood up and looked towards the quarter from which danger was apprehended. O’Connell stood up amongst the rest, and Tom Steele said to him, ‘It is nothing—you need not fear.’ ‘Fear, fear!’ answered O’Connell with so proud a glance, and in such a rebuking tone, that whilst I felt

deeply with his friend, it was also clear to me, that nothing could be more strange to the mind of the Irish Agitator, than the thought of fear.

“ One after another did the different orators and proposers of resolutions perform their respective parts, and it seemed to me as if the great body of the auditory paid as little attention to them as I myself had done. Meanwhile O’Connell sat calmly in his chair. At last his turn came, and then the joy and exultation with which he was received, was actually indescribable. Never did I see any thing to be compared to it, or even like it.

* * * * *

“ The orator retired amid cheers that were repeated over and over again. His friend, Tom Steele, covered his shoulders with a cloak, whilst a second handed him a peach, out of which he took a hearty bite. He then, whilst stretching out his hand for an orange which a third person was presenting to him, said smilingly to one of the by-standers: ‘To succeed with a multitude as a speaker, you must always say something that will excite their spirits and make them laugh.’

“ In one passage, the Liberator presented himself

to my view in a perfectly different light. In the midst of his speech, a portion of his hearers began all at once to run—an unruly horse had broken away. Those nearest to the furious animal gave ground; those who were pressed upon by them, in turn pressed upon their neighbours, and in an instant, a great portion of the congregated mass was in flight—a panic terror seized them, and drove them onward. There was the noise of a hundred thousand men, all in a state of excitement, rising up together, and a portion of them flying away terrified! It was like the rapid advance of a heavy body of cavalry; and with this noise there was the knowledge of the fact, that the garrison at Athlone had been considerably strengthened. Enough! There were all the elements at hand to give wings to the aroused terrors of the multitude, and all was rushing to inextricable confusion, and irremediable disorder—when the calm, but thunder-like tones of O'Connell came pealing over the multitude. He uttered but the words, ‘Stand still!’ and those whose minds but an instant before were confused by fear, appeared as if each was chained to the spot on which that voice reached them! Never did I behold such a cir-

cumstance. It was as if fate would put the power of his word to the proof, and wished to demonstrate that it was omnipotent.

“Such a power, assuredly, no human being ever exercised, who did not know how to touch the finest chords of the human heart.

“With the speech of O’Connell was the popular festival at an end. A few speeches were delivered after this, but the people gradually dispersed, and by the time that the last of the orators was delivering himself of his sentiments, he had but as his auditors a small train of Repealers, who seemed resolved to die martyrs in the cause.

“The road from the place of meeting to Athlone, though but two English miles, still required an hour’s time to get over it; for it was crammed full of carriages of all sorts, wagons, cars, carts, horsemen, and pedestrians. In the van, marched almost in military order, and with colours flying and music playing, the Temperance bands: these were followed by the unorganized masses.

“The evening banquet took place beneath a tent, the tables shot out in rays from a round one in the midst, and at one side there was a cross table for the Committee and the guests.

At this sat Lord Ffrench, as president, and beside him O'Connell, with from twelve to fourteen of the most distinguished personages. Opposite there was a box for ladies, and not far distant from them a band of music. The food and music were equally bad, and the majority of the guests at the grand table seemed to be convinced of the fact, for even few amongst them made the attempt to touch what was set before them ; and I even remarked that the covers were not removed from many of the dishes. O'Connell at first drank only water, afterwards he added a little wine to it, and if I had not seen him partake of a glass of champagne, I should have regarded him as a half teetotaller.

“ The toasts of ‘the Queen,’ of ‘Prince Albert,’ and of ‘the Duchess of Kent,’ were drank with great joy. O’Connell himself gave the word of command to every hurrah, with all the precision of a toast-master. At last came the toast, ‘O’Connell, O’Connell and Repeal.’ ”

“ *The Meeting in Dundalk, 29th June, 1843.—* About five or six miles our stage coach overtook ‘the Liberator;’ we found it exceedingly difficult to proceed, for a multitude of carriages followed

his, and by its sides rode or ran young and old, on horseback and on foot, and all shouting joyfully. As we passed his carriage, which was drawn by four horses, he nodded kindly towards me. I perceived he was accompanied by a member of the Dundalk deputation, whilst a second member, with Tom Steele, occupied the box-seat.

"Before him marched the different bands of the teetotallers, some on foot, some in large vans; they made a most awful noise, for they all played at the same time, and each of them a different tune. The first band played 'God save the Queen'—the second, with respect be it mentioned, 'the Garland of Love'—and the third rattled away, with the force, the rapidity, and the monotony of the clapper of a mill, the constantly-repeated 'Patrick's day in the Morning.' The procession stopped some time before my window, and it may well be fancied what a gratification it must have been to have these three different pieces of music commulated into one! I heard the three pieces afterwards played separately, but, alas! I must own, that so bad were they in detail, that I preferred the triplicated time of 'God save the Queen,' 'the Garland' and 'Patrick's day' to any

one of them separated from the rest—*i.e.* as it was given by the bands of Dundalk.

“At length the procession moved on, and in a few moments afterwards, O’Connell’s carriage, drawn by four horses, was seen turning into the town. O’Connell stood erect in the carriage, and saluted the people on all sides; whilst in every glance of his eye there was triumph, and the exhilarating feelings of joy. And wherefore should there not? Who could, as he, this day say—‘I am the man—Daniel O’Connell?’

“I have often seen many princes and royal personages make their solemn entries into my own old Cologne, and other places, but all was ‘child’s play’ to that which now presented itself to my view. The streets were so full that there was left no longer the possibility of walking in them; all were either borne, or pushed forward. I had a bird’s-eye view of the entire scene; I looked down upon it, and could behold nought but heads—not even the shoulders of the men were visible. Never did I see anything like to this; and never did I hear anything like to that prolonged—that never-ending ‘Hurrah for O’Connell!—hurrah for the Liberator!’. He stopped before the house

where I was; he descended from his carriage; and oh, miracle of miracles! a large broad pathway was instantly opened for him in that dense crowd, which as instantly closed behind him, once he had passed.

“Whilst I was engaged reflecting upon this wondrous spectacle, I beheld another, and one that was still more beautiful. In the very centre of that closely-pressed—that jammed-together throng, I observed one small point unoccupied, which always came nearer and nearer towards the house. What, I asked, can that be? or why is there that little spot left free? The riddle was soon explained—the mystery was soon unravelled; for in the centre of that little unoccupied space, I beheld—a *cripple!* I love the Irish people; but never did I in my life see anything which so much entitles them to the love, the admiration, and the respect of every philanthropic, of every feeling, of every honest heart, as this; making a space, and giving free room to the helpless, pithless cripple, in a crowded multitude, through which the strongest giant would in vain have struggled to force his way. Oh! yes; they are a good, a truly good people—these poor Irish!

* * * *

"I have seldom shaken the hand of any one with so cordial a feeling as that of Tom Steele. Yes—a man of honour—a noble hearted being is 'honest Tom Steele !'

"O'Connell's speech at the dinner was as fine as any of his that I have ever read or heard. It was more grave than usual, even though it occasionally sparkled with humour. In their entirety, his speeches are always the same; but this fact in itself is the proof of the greatness of the orator. There are but few things that possess the privilege of constant repetition; to be always the same, and yet for ever magnificent and beautiful. It is the sea alone—the Alps alone—the finest, greatest works of art of the mightiest masters alone, that one can again and again gaze upon, and yet never be tired looking at them. The speeches of O'Connell have much of this original beauty in them; they are always like to one another, they are in their entirety ever the same. His first Repeal speech in Parliament in 1834, is no other than his speech before the inhabitants of Dundalk, and yet there is in it that which gives it a new hue, an original form, and thus renders it at the

same time exquisitely beautiful, and enchantingly captivating. These are the peculiarities that always distinguish the works of a great master.”*

This repetition and sameness of substance in Mr. O’Connell’s speeches was, in fact, the result of a deliberate purpose. His maxim was, that to enunciate a political axiom, or argument, once or twice, was of little avail ; that things so enunciated scarcely struck the popular mind at all ; and were, at any rate, speedily forgotten. To make an impression—to sink the truth deep in that mind, and cause it to fructify in popular exertion—it was necessary to repeat and to repeat again and again : varying the phrase, if possible, but the matter substantially the same. Indeed, in some points he considered it an advantage that even the very wording should be repeated, till the phrase should catch, and become a popular Shibboleth.

I believe that Cobbett and he were the only two public men that preached and practised this doctrine ; and both with success in their peculiar line.

* “ Ireland and the Irish, during the Repeal Year, 1848. By J. Venedy, Dublin. Translated by W. B. McCabe, Esq. London.”

Venedy, the German, whose descriptions I have quoted, was last year a member of that most incongruous, imbecile, and yet mischievous absurdity, the Frankfort Parliament. I am sorry to say that I believe he showed no greater wisdom than the bulk of his colleagues. Biernatski, whom he mentions, was a Polish refugee of the Revolution of 1831. He had been Minister of Finance for a time during the Revolution in Warsaw. He was settled quietly in Paris when I knew him, and his name has not appeared in any of the disturbances of last year.

CHAPTER X.

MR. MACAULAY.—SECTARIAN BIGOTRY.—PERSECUTION IN SWITZERLAND.—INCREASE OF REPEAL COMMITTEE.—REPEAL ASSOCIATION REPORTS.—MR. O'CONNELL'S SUGGESTIONS.—PROCEEDINGS OF REPEAL COMMITTEE.

AMONG the denouncers of the Repeal Agitation in parliament during the summer of the year 1843, was Thomas Babington Macaulay, poet, orator, historian, and quondam "*Cabinet Minister!*"

Mr. Macaulay, in the debates of ten years previously, on the Irish Coercion Bill of 1833, in his first great display in a reformed (or, I believe, *any*) House of Commons, experienced the fate which genius most richly merits when it degrades itself to ignoble purposes. He came out with an elaborately prepared oration in favour of the new measure of tyranny for Ireland; and it proved a most elaborate and utter failure.

On the occasion of the only time that the lyre of the great Magician of the North was heard to creak—that of his “*carmen triumphale*” on the victory of Waterloo—some such distich as the following was addressed to him:—

“Then none by pistol or by shot
Fell half so flat as Walter Scott !”

It might have been paraphrased with regard to the brilliant Macaulay’s assault upon Ireland and defence of coercion, for he fell flat indeed, and flat in the mud!*

How admirably he has since redeemed his fame it is not at all needful here to detail. The gushing richness and fulness of his eloquence absorbs, fascinates, and carries away his auditory, making them utterly oblivious, or, at least, disregardful of the occasional too great evidences of art and study. He never showed himself ready at an impromptu speech; but the sparkling brilliancy of his prepared efforts excused, covered, and most abundantly atoned for the attendant delays and infrequencies of their exhibition.

* Might the paraphrase run thus?

“Then none did show so shy and *smally*,
As Thomas Babington Macaulay !”

There was, however, a repetition of the *fazZ* in his declamation against Repeal in 1843. Sentence after sentence came out *ore rotundo*, stating alternative after alternative that he would prefer to the measure demanded by the people of Ireland—the restoration of their own parliament—each sentence ending with a “*no, never!*” strongly suggestive of the popular song, or burden of a song,

“*Did you ever? No, I never!*” &c. &c.

In sober sadness, it was *not* worthy of his talents and character to set himself thus up in petulant and puny opposition to a constitutional demand of an aggrieved people. It ought *not* to have been made an occasion for an oratorical display, and for what might indeed be called an empty oratorical bravado. No party in the State has ever yet been impeded in its labours for its object by frantic and unreasoning declamations against it. The repeal of an act of parliament is not a thing that can be proscribed or prevented by a claptrap speech. And if Lords Brougham and Beaumont, in the Lords, and Sir Robert Peel and a few officials, in the Commons, found themselves moved,—the two former from a love of mischief

and notoriety, the right honourable baronet for some politic purpose of the passing moment, and the others *because he did it*,—to commit themselves to the monstrous absurdity of declaring, that they would prefer civil war, with all its inevitable evils and horrors, to the possible, but yet only conjectural, inconveniences of reverting to the old constitutional system of separate parliaments, under which a foreign war was successfully conducted, a domestic rebellion crushed, and Ireland advanced many steps towards permanent prosperity ; such conduct on their parts ought not to have been held worthy of imitation by a man who could not be uncertain of his own position in the eyes of the public ; who had no passing interest of party or of office to subserve ; and who, assuredly, can afford to be original in his opinions and actions.

Of Mr. Macaulay's achievements in the world of poesy, it would be difficult to speak in terms of admiration such as they deserve. In fact, it would need his own glowing language, and brilliancy of thought and expression, adequately to praise them.

Of his History, any criticism here would be out of place : but, as a Catholic, I enter protest against

it for gross sectarian bigotry, undeniably visible, under all the assumption of candour and historic truthfulness. And the general reader has a right to complain, when he finds himself called upon to accept, as accurate recitals of historic events, details and facts, warped and coloured by the party feelings of the day.

But as far as regards the matter of the protest, made in the preceding paragraph, it is only justice to Mr. Macaulay to say, that he is not singular among English writers of all ranks in the literary hierarchy, in the voluntary, or (as I hope in his case) involuntary, *suppressio veri*, and *suggestio falsi*, where Catholicism is concerned.

It is surprising, to say the least, that in this land of liberty—this England, where it is said that the rights of individuals, and in especial the freedom of private judgment, are most honoured and acknowledged,—those sacred rights, where exercised by Catholics abroad, are looked upon almost as crimes against mankind, and the invasions of them hailed with general approbation.

The simple refusal of the Catholic Priests of Prussia to bless certain mixed marriages, the circumstances of which brought them within the

scope of censures a long time recognised as the standing law of the Catholic Church, was in this country magnified into an act of Popish ecclesiastical *usurpation*, to the utter neglect of the fact, that the Priests in no way contested the validity of the *civil* marriage, nor refused to be present at it, in the capacity of witnesses. All that they refused to do was, to perform the ceremony of the Catholic Church, a matter in which they were assuredly justified, when the laws and injunctions of that Church were flagrantly disregarded. In all other respects they recognised the marriage.

Another form of this unfairness is manifest in the treatment that Belgium has met with from the same parties. Protestant Holland, Protestant Prussia, the Protestant States of Switzerland and of Germany generally, will be quoted, for industry, enterprise, prosperity, &c.; but Belgium, teeming with the fruits of industry and successful enterprise, prosperous and peaceful as she is, finds little favour with English publicists, because of her inveterate *Popery*!

In fact she has disappointed them! For the first three or four years of her separation from Protestant Holland, there were the rifest rumours

of her distress ; and the most confident prophecies that she would certainly break down and become bankrupt. Instead of doing so, she has most provokingly insisted, not only on maintaining her condition, but had the further audacity of very much improving it.

The unhappy Catholic Cantons of Switzerland have been denied all sympathy in their most cruel persecutions, because of their being *Catholic*. The assassination of Priests and of lay Catholics of note, the plunder of religious houses, the expulsion, penniless and pitilessly, of Bishops, and of the members of religious orders, including those of females as well as of men, the wholesale plunder of the Catholic laity, and plunder not of mere money alone, nor of mere money and goods; but also of rights and franchises, civil and religious,—in short, the *red republicanism* that is rampant in the unhappy Helvetian Confederacy ;—upon all this there is either a total silence, among the writers of England, or else there is extenuation and apology for the oppressors, because *nominally* Protestant; and misrepresentation and censure for the oppressed, because they have the bad luck of being *Papists*.

Toleration and religious liberty, as understood and advocated by too many English writers, mean the abrogation of every religious principle and practice among Catholics that is at all displeasing or inconvenient to the licentious and atheistical liberals of the Continent; especially of Germany *much be-mused in beer!*

The Committee of the Association increased enormously in number during the stirring spring and summer of 1843. As I have before explained, that Committee resembled in its duties and office the "Council" of English public bodies, such as the "National Political Union," when that body flourished in Birmingham, the Chartist Association, the Anti-Corn-Law League, &c. &c. A very large number of young Barristers in particular joined us at this juncture, and between them and the accession of several country gentlemen, our numbers in the General Committee ran up to between two and three hundred. Of these the average attendance might be set down as about forty ; but occasions were continually occurring when the whole, or nearly the whole number on the list, attended in the committee-room.

As the number of highly intelligent and ener-

getic young patriots increased in our *up-stairs* assemblies, it was found necessary to cut out work for them; and an expedient was hit upon that amply served this end, while also generally useful to the agitation. From its earliest day, the Committee of the Association was in the practice of presenting reports from time to time, upon subjects of immediate interest connected with the cause; but our numbers being comparatively few, the labour had been heavy, and the reports *only* occasional. Now, however, when we had such extensive reinforcements, and when the plethoric state of our exchequer justified the expenses of printing, publishing, &c. to a large amount each month, we set about the work in earnest.

I give a list of the various Reports, &c. published from time to time by the Repeal Association, to show that we were ready and able to give reason for the faith that was in us; and that our demand for Repeal was not a mere unreasoning cry, but the expression of a well-considered and well-founded demand and desire.

Reports of the Loyal National Repeal Association.

FIRST SERIES.	PREPARED BY	DATE.
Report on the number of Representatives to which Ireland is en- titled	D. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	Apr. 21, 1840.
Report.— Ecclesiastical Revenues.	Ditto.	Apr. 23, 1840.
Report.— State of the Franchise in Ireland .	Ditto.	Apr. 27, 1840.
Report.— Means by which the Union was carried	Ditto.	Apr. 30, 1840.
Report.— Suggesting a proposal for the recon- struction of the House of Commons of Ire- land	Ditto.	May 4, 1840.
Report.— Financial In- justice inflicted on Ire- land	Michael Staunton, Esq.	May 12, 1840.
Report.— Determination shown by the Irish People to maintain the free Constitution of Ireland. Resolu- tions of Volunteers of 1782	D. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	May, 1840.
SECOND SERIES.		
First Report.— Resolu- tions passed at the period of the Union against that measure .	Ditto.	August, 1840.
Second Report on ditto .	Ditto..	August, 1840.

REPORT.	PREPARED BY	DATE.
Report. — Fisheries of Ireland	D. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	August, 1840.
Report. — Comparative State of Crime in England and Ireland.	W.J.O'Neill Daunt, Esq.	August, 1840.
Report.—Disastrous Effects of the Union on the Woollen, Silk and Cotton Manufactures of Ireland	T. M. Ray, Esq. Secretary to the Repeal Association	August, 1840.
Repeal Catechism	D. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	Feb. 1842.
Financial Management of Ireland	Michael Staunton, Esq.	August, 1842.
Report.—Various Remedies proposed for the Evils complained of under the existing system of Poor Laws in Ireland	J. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	Jan. 1843.
Argument for Ireland	Ditto.	Jan. 1843.
Commercial Injustices	Ditto.	Jan. 1843.
First General Report of the Parliamentary Committee	W. S. O'Brien, Esq. M.P.	March, 1844.
First Report on Borough Franchises	Francis Brady, Esq. . .	Mar. 11, 1844.
Two Reports on Removal of Irish Poor from England	Robert Mullen, Esq. . .	Mar. 25, 1844, and Mar. 1845.
Petition to the House of Commons for Inquiry into the State Trials	W. S. O'Brien, Esq. M.P.	Feb. 1844.

REPORTS.	PREPARED BY	DATE.
Petition against Franchise Bill	D. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	Apr. 17, 1844.
Report on Fiscal Relations between Great Britain and Ireland	J. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	Apr. 17, 1844.
Report on the Ordnance Memoir of Ireland	Thomas Davis, Esq.	Apr. 17, 1844.
Report on the Irish Municipal Amendment Bill	Michael Doheny, Esq.	Apr. 23, 1844.
Report on the County Franchises of Ireland	Francis Brady, Esq.	Ap. 29, 1844.
Report on the Papers relating to Scinde	M. J. Barry, Esq.	May 13, 1844.
Report. — Commercial Tariffs and Regulations of the several States of Europe	J. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	May 20, 1844.
Report. — Joint - stock Banking in Ireland	John Reynolds, Esq.	April, 1844.
Report.—Arms (Ireland) Returns	Thomas Davis, Esq.	May 27, 1844.
Report.—Lord Elliott's Registration Bill	J. L. Fitzgerald, Esq.	June, 1844.
Report.—Industrial Resources of Ireland	T. McNevin, Esq.	August, 1844.
Report.—Glass Duties	Martin Crean, Esq.	Aug. 1844.
Report. — Petit Juries, county Tipperary	J. C. Fitzpatrick, Esq.	Aug. 13, 1844.
Report.—Hurrying Bills through Parliament	Thomas Davis, Esq.	Aug. 19, 1844.
Report.—Opening Post-Office Letters	Ditto.	Aug. 26, 1844.

REPORTS.	PREPARED BY	DATE.
Report.—Attendance of Irish Members . . .	Thomas Davis, Esq. . .	Sept. 2, 1844.
Report.—Irish Fisheries	M. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	Sept. 2, 1844.
Address to the Queen on incarceration of State Prisoners	W.S. O'Brien, Esq. M.P.	June 2, 1844.
Second General Report	Ditto.	Nov. 26, 1844.
Seven Reports on the Estimates of 1844-5 .	Thomas Davis, Esq. . .	July to Nov.
Report on Regulation of the Profession of Physic, &c.	John Gray, Esq. M.D. .	March, 1845.
First Report on Land Question	D. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	Apr. 14, 1845.
Appendix of Evidence to ditto	J. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	Apr. 14, 1845.
Observations on Report of Chamber of Com- merce	Bryan A. Molloy, Esq..	March, 1845.
Report on a Bill to es- tablish Museums of Art in Corporate Towns .	J. Kelly, Esq. M.P. . .	Apr. 14, 1845.
Report.—Maynooth Col- lege Endowment Bill	D. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	Apr. 14, 1845.
Second and third Re- ports on Land Ques- tion	Ditto.	April & May.
Three Reports on Repeal Reading-room . . .	T. M. Ray, Esq. . .	April, 1845.
Report on Service of Process Bill for Eng- land and Scotland . .	James O'Dowd, Esq. .	May, 1845.
Report on issue of Bank- notes in Ireland . . .	J. Reynolds, Esq. T.C.	June 3, 1845.

REPORTS.	PREPARED BY	DATE.
Three Reports on the Budget of 1845 . . .	J. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	March, 1845.
Report on Poor-Law Amendment Bill . . .	R. Mullen, Esq. . . .	June 10, 1845.
Two Reports on Bill to promote letting of Field-Gardens . . .	W. Mackey, Esq. . . .	June 30, 1845.
Report.—Tenants' Compensation Bill . . .	Thomas Davis, Esq. . .	May 23, 1845.
Repeal Dictionary . . .	J. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	July, 1845.
Report.—Charitable Donations and Bequest (Ireland)	B. A. Molloy, Esq. . .	July 21, 1845.
Report.—Circuit Regulations (England) Commission	J. L. Fitzgerald, Esq. .	July, 1845.
Report.—Progress of Legislation for Ireland— Session 1845	B. A. Molloy, Esq. . .	Sept. 1845.
Report.—Valuation of Ireland Bill	M. Doheny, Esq. . .	July, 1845.
Report.—General Grand Jury Laws of Ireland .	J. L. Fitzgerald, Esq. .	Dec. 1, 1845.
Report.—Inquiries for Irish Railway Legislation to be transacted in Dublin	Sir C. O'Loghlen, Bart.	Dec. 22, 1845.
Report.—Lunatic Asylums	Charles Bianconi . . .	Feb. 2, 1846.
Third General Report .	W. S. O'Brien, Esq. M.P.	Feb. 16, 1846.
Second Edition, "Argument for Ireland"	J. O'Connell, Esq. M.P.	June 20, 1846.^

Subsequent to the unhappy schism and rupture in the Repeal Association, additional reports were drawn up, in anticipation of a discussion in Parliament of the great question of Repeal. Mr. O'Connell had announced in the autumn of 1846, his intention to bring the question forward the next session—an intention frustrated by what circumstances it is unnecessary to say.

To prepare the public mind for this, the "Repeal Discussion" Sub-committee then presented the following Reports, viz.—

Two on the Fiscal and Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland.

One on the State of Trade and Commerce in Ireland, epitomized from former documents, by T. M. Ray, the Secretary.

One upon the Evils of Absenteeism, and on the Deportation of Irish Paupers from England and Scotland; contrasting the inhuman readiness manifested in various parts of those countries to throw back on Ireland, at the risk of life, the worn-out Irish artisans and labourers, who had spent their best days and the greater part of their lives in adding to the wealth of Great Britain; with the utter refusal of Parliament, and of successive

ministries, to sanction or propose any legislative measure that might tend to check the disastrous drain of absentee rent, which robs Ireland of so much of her capital.

A report on Land-tenure, and the various projects started by various parties for the amelioration of the relations between landlord and tenant.

Two or three reports on projects for the Employment of the People during the potato dearth, and its concurrent and consequent disasters, by the undertaking of an extensive system of waste-land reclamation, &c.

Three or four reports, showing that the Catholic Emancipation Act had been practically repealed in so far as regarded not only the appointment to the multitudinous minor offices in the executive ; but in the far more grievous respect of the jury panels in counties, and jury lists in political trials.

The minor Committees and Sub-committees, in which these reports were prepared and drawn up, were orderly enough and generally unanimous in their deliberations and decisions. But this was by no means the case with the "General and

Finance Committee," the chief or managing Committee of the whole.

My father's experience in Agitation proved to him that there should be the following incidents to any and all forms of popular organization :—

1st. That all deliberations and proceedings should be *open*.

He never permitted a secret or an exclusive Committee to be formed, or to sit. Entire publicity and above-board operations were always insisted on by him.

2d. A regular record of proceedings: such record to be also open to examination, whenever required.

3dly. Facility to any member of the general body to get himself upon any Committee. It only required that the individual so desiring admission should be proposed and seconded; and he was almost certain of being instantly appointed.

4thly. The proceedings of Committees to be at all times subject to revision, or to appeal from them in the open Association itself; and none of its acts, *if questioned*, to be considered valid, unless sanctioned and adopted in the open Association.

This was a necessity of the state of the law in

Ireland respecting public assemblies; which forbid not only all manner of delegation *to*, but also all delegation *from*, such assemblies.

The General Committee had thus to attend to the every-day working of the cause under what must at first sight appear considerable difficulties. It could never play any hidden game; all its counsels, designs, and acts were at all times open and known to the public; and even if a resolution of importance by any chance happened not to get wind on the day of its passing, (a very rare occurrence indeed, as we generally found that before evening of the days of our sittings, the major part of what had been done was known all over Dublin,) there it was in black and white, on the Committee minute-books, sure to be seen and made public during the week. And the great number, and facile additions to that number, of members of Committee, and the advantage given to *crotchety* and troublesome men, by the knowledge that, however outvoted up stairs, they could rip up past transactions again, and cause a re-discussion in the Hall, must, *prima facie*, seem calculated to obstruct all rational progress and decision.

But in practice these difficulties were found comparatively trifling. As to numbers, as has been already mentioned, an average attendance of about forty was the rule, even when the total of the names on the Committee list had exceeded 200. And the very knowledge that there was little or no real difficulty in getting upon the Committee actually operated as a check to the desire of being upon it.

The openness and publicity of our counsels and proceedings constituted no new feature in popular agitation. Such had been the invariable practice of the Catholic Association. Mr. O'Connell had set out in political life with the determination to avoid all concealments. He had seen how futile had been the attempts of the Irish revolutionists in 1798 and 1803 to cover themselves with the cloak of secrecy—how treachery had waited upon all their movements, and frustrated every hope. He had noticed the mutual suspicions and frequent betrayals that occurred among their colleagues in the secret councils of those times, when the first ill-success spread panic. And as his was a policy that in itself had no need to shun the day, he resolved to pursue it throughout with entire and

consistent openness; and rather to forego a collateral advantage purchasable by secrecy, than in any way depart from the line he had laid down for himself, and put his fairest hopes for Ireland in the power and at the mercy of traitors, fools, or cowards.

The liability of the Committee's resolves and proceedings to be revised, and if need were, annulled, by the Association in full meeting, proved a difficulty as inconsiderable in practice as that of the liability to inconvenient numbers in the Committee. The appeal to the general meeting was indeed pretty often *threatened*; but most rarely put in execution. Men were satisfied with the impression they made by the threat of appeal, and the minor concessions they extorted by its aid; and partly influenced by the consciousness that they would have but their trouble for their pains, as the majority of the Committee usually included the men of most influence in the Association; and partly actuated by the better motive of desiring to avoid all public squabbling, the dissenting minority, in most cases, submitted and pushed their opposition no further than the door of the Committee-room.

In the records of Agitation there has been but one man noted for carrying the war out of the Committee-room. This gentleman, an active and prominent member of the Catholic Association, was usually to be found in opposition to the plans in favour with the main body of the Committee. Time after time he protracted the discussion of particular matters during three or four days of successive adjournments, before a decision could be had upon them, and "even though vanquished, he could (and did) argue still." Mr. O'Connell upon several occasions put the question to him whether he was satisfied to abide by the decision to which the Committee had come; and even offered to re-open the discussion again, and let him try his chance once more, rather than that the divisions in Committee should be repeated in the general meeting. The individual alluded to generally answered that he gave the matter up; and yet, on the next day of meeting of the Association, he was sure to be found broaching once more the whole subject of the dispute, as if nothing at all respecting it had been agreed upon up stairs!

It would be an endless task to endeavour to

recount the varieties of difficulties and distractions that beset the current of business in the General Committee. The labour of conducting that business was great at all times, but particularly so in our numerous and excited meetings of 1843. The anxieties at that time were excessive, as scarcely a Committee day passed, without some startling novelty being proposed and pressed with most energetic earnestness upon us. We never knew what the day might bring forth, and were compelled to be perpetually upon our guard against surprises.

It was strange and sad to witness the conduct of a few of the younger men who joined us in this year. At an age when a disposition to confidingness and generosity of sentiment towards others is most usually remarked, they seemed to have entered the Association imbued with feelings of the darkest, and yet the paltriest suspicion of persons who had preceded them in the Agitation. A constant expectation of making out something very wonderful; some terrible offence against the country, and against patriotism—a disposition to resist everything that originated with an elder member of Committee; and almost to impute

motives to that member and to his supporters, and a rather intolerant tone in pressing on us their own peculiar propositions and plans—such were the characteristics of, as I have said, a few among the crowd of active spirits that enrolled themselves this year in the national struggle. Hence many of our difficulties of the time and afterwards, and nearly all our anxieties. For the open opposition and hostility of the Anti-Repealers, English and Irish, was of small account in our eyes, as compared with the dangers of internal dissension and division. With union in the popular body success had been achieved in 1829, in despite of the will of the then Sovereign, and the prejudices and hostility of the Ministry and the two Houses of Parliament. The organization of the Repeal Association was infinitely more extensive and general throughout the country; and if we could only keep united, there was every rational probability of speedy and entire success. But once divided, failure and ruin would be inevitable.

Unhappily those dissensions and divisions, and that entire disunion we with so much reason dreaded and deprecated, were laboured for, and

fostered even from the beginning of 1843 ; and the propagators of them sedulously pursued their disastrous ends, till they met their full accomplishment in that year of disgrace and dismay, the year 1848.

CHAPTER XI.

MEETING AT MULLAGHMAST.—RATHMORE.—KILCULLEN.—REPEAL SPEECHES.—THE BANQUET.—GOVERNMENT PROCLAMATION.—MEETING AT CLOONTARF FORBIDDEN.—CONCLUSION.

IT was late in the autumn of this year, (1843,) that the great meeting was held at Mullaghmast, in the County of Kildare, which formed a very prominent topic with our prosecutors at the subsequent State Trials.

The locality of this meeting was famous, or rather *infamous*, from the circumstance mentioned in the following extract from writers on Irish history :—

“ After the 19th year of Queen Elizabeth, a horrible massacre was committed by the English at the Rathmore of Mulloghmaston, on some hundreds of the most peaceable of the Irish gentry, invited thither on the public faith and under the protection of Government.”

The "Rathmore" mentioned in the foregoing, is one of those singular constructions common in Ireland, generally designated by the people, "Danish forts." They are too well-known to the general reader from the many interesting works upon the antiquities of these islands, to need any detailed description here. The Rath at Mullaghmast is, like nearly all the others, a circular enclosure on the top of an eminence, with a descent from all sides of it close to the fort itself. The walls are artificial mounds, rising to about twice the height of a man, and clothed centuries ago with the ordinary vegetation and verdure that soon covers and almost obliterates the traces of man, where he has ceased to dwell or to make resort.

The space enclosed is of the largest, and quite competent to have accommodated the multitude of victims who are recorded to have been upon it. Certainly, no place could be better fitted for a trap for the unwary, the mound being so high all around it, with the exception of one or two narrow openings, which were well guarded, doubtless; while on the top of the mounds, the

slaughterers may be supposed to have taken their stations, at least during the first of the assault. The doomed Janissaries at Constantinople, or the Mamelukes in Alexandria, were scarcely more securely trapped for wholesale slaughter and utter destruction, than the crowds of the ancient nobility and gentry of Ireland within this fatal enclosure, into which they were led and betrayed by their disastrous reliance upon English honour.

We left Duhlin on a Saturday afternoon, with the intention of sleeping at Kilcullen, a large village town in Kildare. We were as merry a coachfull of Agitators, packed both inside and out, upon and in a large mail hired for the purpose, as ever yet started on an expedition; and my father, as usual, the liveliest and the merriest of the party. He

"With many a merry tale, and many a song,
Cheer'd the rough road, and made us wish it long!"

There is a sort of poetic licence in the last quotation. He was guiltless of having, at any period of his life, ever *sung* a song; but was fond of reciting the most touching and patriotic of the

sweet and stirring lays of Tommy Moore; as well as many of the older songs and ballads, having reference to the melancholy history of Ireland. His recitals were beautiful; completely entrancing and carrying away his auditory. I have witnessed even phlegmatic *Saxon* blood aroused by them, and warmed up to expressions of sympathy with the fall of Ireland's fortunes, and horror at the means of English conquest.

We were received at Kilcullen by the good and amiable parish priest, the Rev. Dr. Murtagh; who most hospitably insisted on our taking possession of his domicile in every way. A merry dinner followed, and then to bed early, to be ready for the good work of the morrow. After mass had been heard by the Catholics of the party, and our Protestant colleagues had had the opportunity of attending their own service, we set out for Mullaghmast, attended and preceded by carriages with deputations from the various municipal bodies of Leinster, all in their robes, bands of music of various Temperance Societies, dressed out in their uniforms, unknown at the Horse Guards, gentry and others from Dublin and other

towns, &c. &c. As usual, there was a *guerilla cavalry* of stout, comfortable well-to-do farmers and yeomen, on their own farm-horses; many of them, too, with their comely wives, snugly seated *en croupe*, and the younger men each with a wand and ribbons of sky-blue and white, or green, to mark their office as organizers and *peace-keepers*; while others bore the same insignia on foot, to show they were also ready to act as a voluntary police, and prevent the slightest infraction of the law.

My father, of course, spoke from the centre platform; and, as a matter of course, the horrible incident that has given a melancholy celebrity in Ireland to the great "Rath" of Mullaghmast, was referred to and dilated upon by him. The subsequent speakers made it the chief theme and burden of their orations; some with considerable effect and impression, and others with *effect*, too, but not of a very flattering nature.

I was particularly struck with the speech of one individual. He had arrived in the course of his most fluent harangue at that period of the tale, (already ten times told,) where the Irish

chieftains and their leading dependents were entered into the enclosure they never again were to repass with life; and thus he announced the catastrophe:—

“And while they were expecting to be regaled with all the delicacies of the season, *they had their heads cut off! !*”

This, as to descriptive power and effect, appeared to me quite worthy to be classed with the following, in a description of an exhibition of pictures about fifteen years ago. The subject represented was a murder; and the describer thus wrote:—

“Behind him (*scil.* the victim), stands a ruffian, evidently animated by no friendly intentions, about to stab him in the back!”

The presumption in the second limb of the sentence was, to say the least of it, not at all forced or unnatural.

The usual “Banquet” took place within the Rath itself, which admitted of the construction of an immense tent, beneath which, not less certainly than 600 or 700 persons managed to stow themselves. The immense tent was hand-

somely adorned with festoons of laurel and of flowers, and patriotic mottoes and devices; and the brilliancy of the scene increased by three or four rows of well-dressed ladies at either end.

I had the honour of being appointed Chairman on this occasion, and as I took my elevated post, the following intimation was conveyed to me by the stewards:—

“ We must break up at nine for the sake of the Press, and also to make sure that the remainder of the people go off the ground to their homes. It is now six, and you have three hours to get through the dinner and the twenty-two toasts. Do what you can.”

Thus informed and incited, I had to set to, and I have always made it my boast since, that I “got over the ground,” in spite even of the somewhat pertinacious melody of the Temperance bands; and “*did the work*” a quarter of an hour short of the stipulated time. Let me recommend my example to others who may have similar troublesome honours thrust upon them. I spoke very briefly myself, and with the exception of one

or two speakers, I was up to propose the next toast within a minute or a minute and a half, after the last had been duly responded to.

Our descent from the Rath, after the termination of the proceedings, was exceedingly picturesque. The night had fallen darkly, and the voluntary police, or "O'Connell's Police," as they had insisted upon designating themselves, held each a huge torch, its murky and flickering glare throwing a lurid light upon the grassy walls of the moat, and upon the visages and forms of all present. Fancy might almost have imaged us as the shadowy and "blood bolstered" forms of the murdered multitude who had there fallen, revisiting the scene of their horrid fate in the dead darkness and stillness of that autumn night.

The next week there were "rumours dire," that a crisis was at hand—that the Government, having hitherto displayed vigour only in empty denunciations and bravadoes in Parliament, had at length screwed their spirits up to actual interference with the popular demonstrations.

On Friday, 6th of October, it was known that an important Privy Council was being held in

Dublin, to receive a despatch from the English Privy Council, having reference to an intended great meeting on the strands of Clontarf near Dublin, announced for Sunday. What result was come to we possessed no possible means of divining, and had to wait in patience or *impatience* for twenty-four hours, ere we learned it. In expectation of a *coup d'état*, my father assembled the Committee early on Saturday, and while waiting intelligence, we occupied ourselves with the huge heap of missives from various parts of the country, and from Liverpool, Glasgow, &c., announcing the *contingents* that were on their way to Dublin to attend the meeting on Sunday. As the day wore on, the Committee-room became densely crowded, and the excitement rapidly increased. At a little after three we were informed that an unexpected channel of intelligence had been opened, and that we might therefore expect to hear whatever was to be heard; and at length, at half-past three a breathless messenger rushed in with a copy of a proclamation, just wet from the press, against any meeting at Clontarf.

What was to be done? The day was closing

fast, and early next morning it was certain that thousands would be on the ground, and multitudes of others in full march towards it, from various directions. How were all these to be warned, and what *could* be done to avert the fearful chances of collision and bloodshed upon the morrow? chances incurred with such startling recklessness by those, whosoever they might be, that had delayed issuing the proclamation.

My father instantly met the case. Instead of wasting time in denunciations, he sent one of his most faithful and trusty followers and adherents, Mr. Peter Martin, a most highly respectable builder, of Dublin, with full powers to cause the platform to be taken down, and removed. Next, there was an appeal for volunteers to offer themselves to go out and notice the country people approaching the city. At once, twenty or thirty gentlemen offered, and were despatched in pairs; while others were charged with the same commission throughout the streets of Dublin. In short, every thing conceivable in the hurry of the moment was done by Mr. O'Connell, and the General Committee, to prevent the spilling of

human blood ; which would have been the inevitable consequence, had the original intention been adhered to, and the people been allowed to proceed unwarned, till they found themselves full in front of the strong body of soldiery that had been privately ordered to the ground.

It came to be known subsequently that the proclamation was received from the English Privy Council, and *adopted* here on Friday, the 6th ; yet its publication was, as I have stated, delayed till so late on Saturday, that the chances were a hundred to one that it could not be made known in sufficient time to prevent the immense assemblage coming together. The present Earl St. Germains, then Lord Eliot, and Secretary for Ireland, actually put forward in the House as a reason for this delay, which might have cost thousands of lives, that “time was wanted to *arrange the wording* of the proclamation !!!”

I must mention here, that a rumour of a very fearful character prevailed as to the *real* cause of the delay ;—a rumour officially sneered at, indeed, but never contradicted, or, at least, satisfactorily contradicted. It was, that in the Irish Privy Coun-

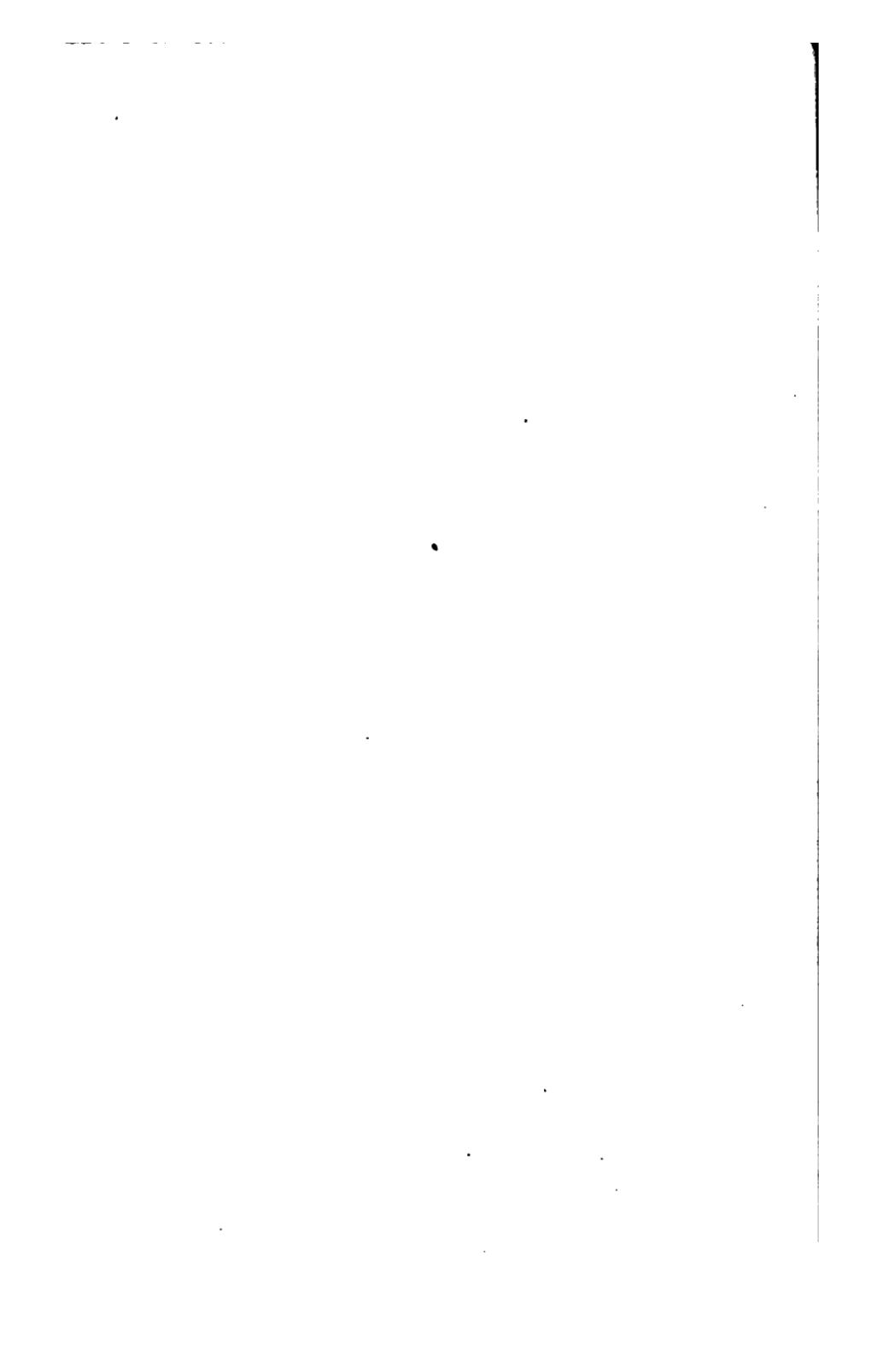
cil a disposition was manifested to urge the total suppression of the proclamation, or, at least, its delay until Sunday morning, so as the people might assemble, and not be made aware till they reached the ground that the meeting was forbidden. The soldiery were then to advance, the proclamation and the riot act were to be read, and the sequel—left to chance!

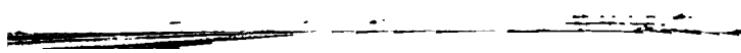
Rumour added, that, but for the energetic and most honourable, while most natural and humane remonstrances of the Irish Commander-in-Chief, the gallant and good Sir Edward Blakeney, this most monstrous and devilish proposition had some chance of being adopted.

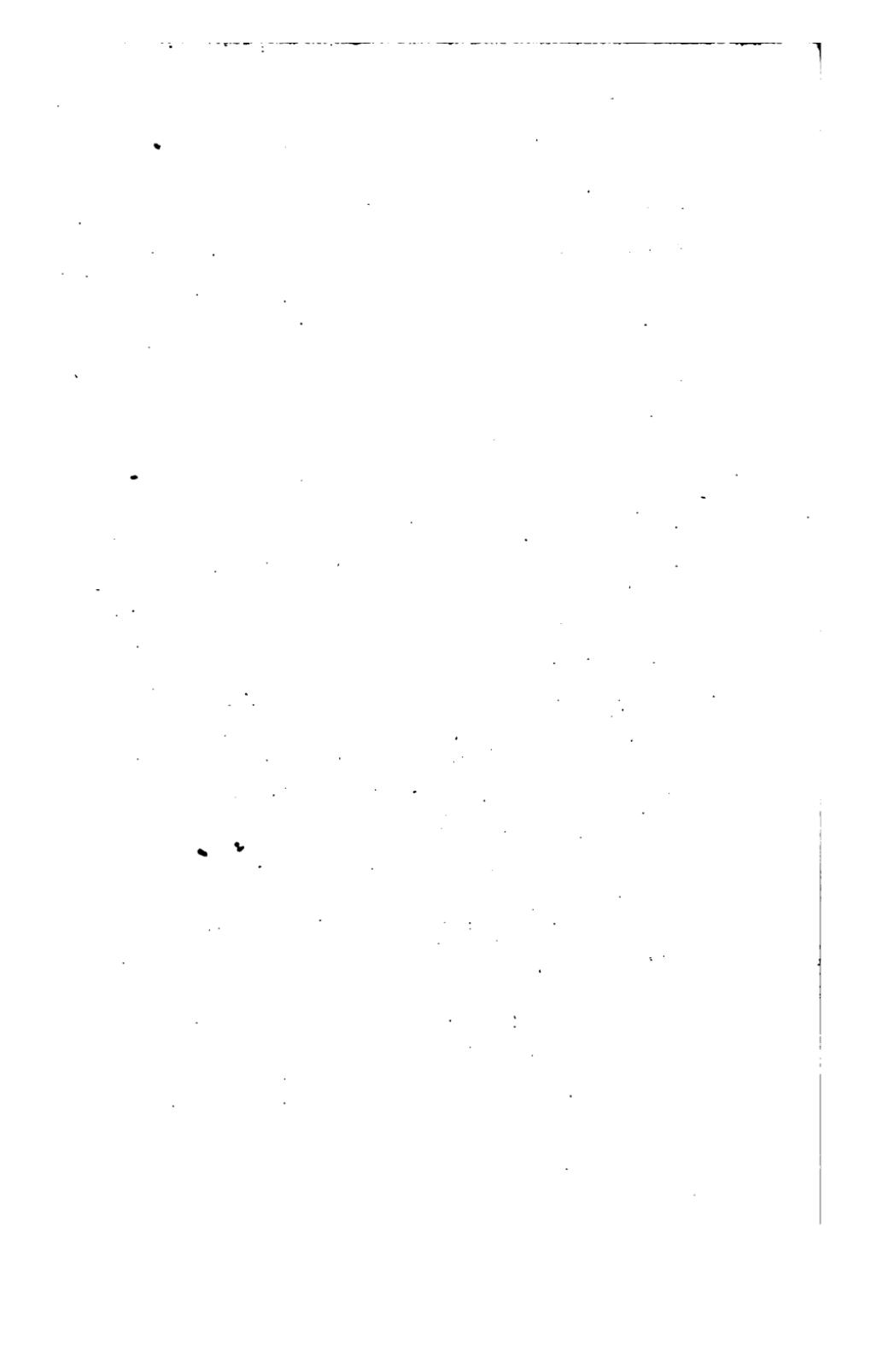
If these statements can be proved to have been unfounded,—and for the honour of our common humanity it is most desirable that they should be so proved,—it deeply imports the character and conscience of every man who had a seat at that Council Board on those eventful days,—saving always and excepting the good Sir Edward Blakeney,—to have an official refutation of them published even now.

My limits here warn me to conclude, at least for the present, these hasty memoranda. I have endeavoured to jot down things exactly as I recollect them, and to deal fairly and truthfully with every incident and person I have noticed. There has not, at any rate, been any wilful desire to give offence, or to misrepresent; and all that I have dealt with must be allowed to be fair matter of public comment.

THE END.







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